

ACTION DIRECTE
Ultra-Left Terrorism in France,
1979–1987

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Abbreviations

- A2 – *Antenne 2*
- AD – *Action directe*
- ADi – *Action directe internationale*
- ADn – *Action directe nationale*
- AFP – *Agence France Presse*
- AR – *Affiche rouge*
- ATIC – *Association technique de l'importation charbonnière*
- BNP – *Banque nationale de Paris*
- BR – *Brigate Rosse*
- BRB – *Brigade de répression du banditisme*
- BW – *Black War*
- CCC – *Cellules combattantes communistes*
- CDP – *Cause du peuple*
- CFDT – *Confédération française démocratique du travail*
- CGT – *Confédération générale du travail*
- CIRPO – *Conférence internationale des résistances en pays occupés*
- CLER – *Comités de liaison des étudiants révolutionnaires*
- Clodo – *Comité liquidant ou détournant les ordinateurs*
- CNPF – *Conseil national du patronat français*
- CPSU – *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*
- DPS – *Détenus particulièrement signalés*
- DST – *Direction de la surveillance du territoire*
- EEC – *European Economic Community*
- ESU – *Étudiants socialistes unifiés*
- FAHR – *Front armé homosexuel révolutionnaire*
- FARL – *Fractions armées révolutionnaires libanaises*
- FEB – *Fédération des entreprises belges*
- FER – *Fédération étudiante révolutionnaire*
- FHAR – *Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire*
- FN – *Front national*
- FRAP – *Front révolutionnaire d'action prolétarienne*
- FTP – *Francs-tireurs partisans*
- GARI – *Groupes d'action révolutionnaires internationalistes*
- GBGPS – *Groupe Bakounine-Gdansk-Paris-Guatemala-Salvador*
- GIGN – *Groupe d'intervention de la gendarmerie nationale*

GP – *Gauche prolétarienne*
 GRB – *Groupe de répression du banditisme*
 INLA – *Irish National Liberation Army*
 JCR – *Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire*
 LCR – *Ligue communiste révolutionnaire*
 LO – *Lutte ouvrière*
 MIL – *Mouvement ibérique de libération*
 MLF – *Mouvement de Libération des Femmes*
 MPPT – *Mouvement pour un parti des travailleurs*
 MRP – *Mouvement républicain populaire*
 NAPAP – *Noyaux armés pour l'autonomie populaire*
 NRP – *Nouvelle résistance populaire*
 OCI – *Organisation communiste internationaliste*
 ONI – *Office national de l'immigration*
 PCF – *Parti communiste français*
 PCI – *Partito Comunista Italiano*
 PCMLF – *Parti communiste marxiste-léniniste de France*
 PCR – *Parti communiste révolutionnaire (marxiste-léniniste)*
 PS – *Parti socialiste*
 PSU – *Parti socialiste unifié*
 RAF – *Rote Arme Faktion*
 RG – *Renseignements généraux*
 RPR – *Rassemblement pour la République*
 SAT – *Société Anonyme de Télécommunications*
 SEMIREP – *Société mixte de rénovation du quartier Plaisance*
 SFIO – *Section française de l'internationale ouvrière*
 SONACOTRA – *Société Nationale de Constructions pour les Travailleurs*
 TGV – *train de grande vitesse*
 TRT – *Télécommunications radioélectriques et téléphones*
 UDF – *Union pour la démocratie française*
 UEC – *Union des étudiants communistes*
 UEO – *Union de l'Europe Occidentale*
 UJCml – *Union des jeunesses communistes – marxistes-léninistes*
 UNEF – *Union nationale des étudiants français*
 UTA – *Union des transports aériens*
 VLR – *Vive la révolution*

1 Interpreting Terrorism: A Case-study of *Action directe*

'Brothers, when the time of triumph comes, with good fortune from both worlds as our companion, then by one single warrior on foot a king may be stricken with terror, though he own more than a hundred thousand horsemen.'¹

The following study centres on explaining the emergence of a violent revolutionary protest faction in a stable Western political system. The explanation focuses on the group *Action directe* (AD), which was active in France between 1979 and 1987. It will demonstrate that AD's ideology was based on rational motives that were derived from a reading of the context. In general, this analysis outlines AD's values and goals to 'take into account the sense that the actors themselves give their actions, and the constraints or norms (even if they are monstrous) to which they are subject'.² The discussion will also show that AD's rational character did not help the group achieve the ends it set for itself. Most existing literature on terrorism does not help us understand AD since, by attempting to 'generalize' and compare, it is too broad to account for the specificities of one case. The French context is moreover extremely problematic for analyses based on the assumption that terrorism is a sign of instability. France is a stable democracy in which violence appears on an episodic basis.

Several conclusions about the problems in the literature on terrorism guide this discussion. First, a general explanation of terrorism is not considered possible at this time since the analytical value of the term is limited and not applicable to a wide range of phenomena. 'Terrorism', as Jenny Hocking points out, has a general character that deters effective differentiation and explanation:

Terrorism is not a neutral or purely descriptive term. In the sense that its understanding is based on perceptions of legitimacy structured according to a bench-mark of political and social 'normality', 'terrorism' is an ideological construct.³

In the second place, this discussion is guided by the view that case-studies, not existing analyses of terrorism, are the most promising path towards a satisfactory examination of the significance of terrorist violence. To this end, the text focuses on a case that superficially resembles the so-called terrorist threat, but that is in fact quite different: AD was more endangered than were French institutions or society. Third, this text views an examination of motives as an effective means to explain 'unpredictability', a factor that is often cited by analysts of terrorism. Terrorists may articulate rational bases for action. In view of the fact that AD carefully articulated its motives and its attacks expressed goals,

A narrow perception of terrorism as essentially indiscriminate would consequently remove assassinations and the murder of specific 'symbolic' individuals from the realm of terrorism . . . much of the activities of terrorist groups . . . (have) been built upon a selection of targets chosen specifically for their position within the political and economic systems.⁴

Fourth, the discussion views the treatment of revolutionary terrorism as an aberration to be a misapprehension that equates 'political violence with a single form of such violence – terrorism; and then implies, or assumes, that all terrorism is "revolutionary" or "aimed at the overthrow of governments".'⁵ Finally, the text regards labelling terrorism as 'indiscriminate' to be missing the point. The assumption implies that 'terrorism' has a single definition and ignores how violence 'must be highly discriminate in order to provoke the type of response desired'.⁶ Neglecting motives, obsession with left-wing revolutionaries, ignoring state terrorism and fixating on the arbitrary and random are all endemic to the literature on terrorism.

The development of a general theory of terrorism would certainly help to improve social science treatment of political violence in general. However, such a possibility is not imminent. The state of social science knowledge of many kinds of 'terrorist' groups is so limited that even comparisons between the so-called 'Euro-terrorists' of the 1980s is hampered by lack of careful observation. What is known about the Italian and German wings of the phenomenon, especially that they emerged from broader social movements, immediately distances them from AD. Today's analyses most often dissect terrorism into components that are compared across contexts. The resulting cross-case analyses of specific aspects of terrorist violence hinder the development of a general theory because they fail to provide 'frames of appreciation, cognitive maps, concept packages, and methodology to comprehend complex phenomena that cannot be understood through decomposition into easier-to-analyze sub-elements'.⁷ In the worst instances, analysts denounce terrorists as psycho-

paths, qualify their violence as new and extraordinary, and characterize terrorism as episodic, dysteleological, incoherent, abnormal and unacceptable. 'Terrorism' is characterized as 'omnipresent' and specific threats are rarely described as manageable or less than catastrophic. If incidents *are* unprecedented, analytical attention should turn to the 'sets of ideas . . . [that] . . . posit, explain, and justify ends and means of organized political action, irrespective of whether such action aims to preserve, amend, uproot or rebuild a given order'.⁸ If the effects of terrorism are unpredictable, examining the motives in a specific case might help explain why this is so. An examination that focuses on a revolutionary political faction (AD) in a stable Western society (France) circumvents the problems inherent in interpreting terrorism. Procedures based on simplification and comprehensive approximation are premature since few individual incidents of 'terrorism' have been sufficiently examined. The resulting analyses are theoretically impoverished, lack contextual substantiation, exhibit poor taxonomical development and generalize on the basis of insufficient data.

At an early stage of theory-building, intensive examinations have limited applicability: 'a single case can constitute neither the basis for a valid generalization nor the ground for disproving an established generalization'. Accordingly, the present study identifies the peculiarities of one group in order to respond to the lack of contextual research, poor taxonomical development and premature generalizations in existing literature. It draws its force from the fact that 'intensive study and empathetic feel for cases provide authoritative insights into them'.⁹ By isolating one example and avoiding comparison, the examination is a 'basic data-gathering operation, and can thus contribute indirectly to theory-building'.¹⁰ Rather than trying to define regular relations between cases, the study aims to formulate hypotheses for subsequent interpretations.¹¹ The interpretation is in this sense 'hypothesis-generating' since it provides contextually specific 'generalizations in areas where no theory exists yet'.¹² Although AD is not necessarily comparable with other cases, the study may 'uncover relevant additional variables that were not considered previously . . . or refine the definitions of some or all of the variables'.¹³ Owing to the lack of well-researched examples to compare, examining one case is a research strategy that may

stimulate the imagination toward discerning important general problems and possible theoretical solutions . . . [It] ties directly into theory-building, and therefore is less concerned with overall concrete configurations.¹⁴

However, at the same time, a case approach does have limits, especially in relation to conspiratorial political factions. The latter are by definition

difficult to examine since they operate without the mass relays that characterize contemporary Western political behaviour. Given the difficulties in observing a conspiratorial political faction like AD on a first-hand basis, the method selected for this study focuses on an ideological framework and symbols that 'legitimize in morally unquestionable postulates the predatory use of such bargaining weapons as groups possess'.¹⁵ AD used ritual violence as a way of symbolically communicating its goals and views to the French political system. These symbols are closely related to politics since:

every political act that is controversial or regarded as really important is bound to serve in part as a condensation [summarizing] symbol. It evokes a quiescent or an aroused mass response because it symbolizes a threat or reassurance.¹⁶

Symbols are tools that distinguish 'complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into orderly actions'.¹⁷ In AD's case, metaphors such as 'capitalism', 'revolution', and 'crisis' gave its acts coherency, orientated strategies, and connected its ideology to French political traditions. The general orientations set by French political history are crucial to understanding AD. As in all political cultures, French ideologies are:

sets of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behaviour in a political system. It encompasses both the political ideals and the operating norms of a polity . . . A political culture is the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members of that system . . .¹⁸

Like other Western political organizations, AD used ideology in a 'struggle to embody a new politics and a new society'.¹⁹ However, unlike other political groups, it infiltrated the dominant symbolic order in an effort to 'sacrifice' the system and employed symbols for their 'drawing-together, intensifying, catalysing impact upon the respondent'.²⁰ Its 'ritual' violence is thus best explained in political-ideological terms that clarify 'political acts remote from the individual's immediate experience'.²¹ These terms help to avoid the assumptions that human behaviour is uniform, that violence always has similar results, and do not ignore different intensities, types and meanings. Traditions and symbols help to delineate AD's attempt to 'relate lower-order meanings to higher-order assumptions, or to "ground" more surface-level meanings to their deeper bases'.²² In the

following discussion, AD's ideology will be set in the context of extreme-left traditions that structure 'particular culturally provided sequences of stylized actions'.²³ Extreme-left traditions shaped a revolutionary ideology in which attacking capitalist collaborators was conceivable. The persistence of these traditions in French history encouraged AD's belief that it had a potential following and was providing a needed protest function. Accordingly, the group's vocation was based on themes that the extreme left had discarded. This vocation effectively made the group a degenerated version of *gauchisme*.²⁴

The weaknesses in the literature on terrorism are obvious in several of the approaches frequently employed. Psychological interpretations have been widely used. They are often based on theories of frustration-aggression and relative deprivation, although neither theory is now used widely by psychologists. Frustration-aggression theory is based on the idea that 'aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression'.²⁵ Rather than verifying the claim by referring to specific cases, analysts have developed an approach that allegedly illustrates the deviant nature of political terrorism. Lawrence Freedman argues that frustration leads terrorists to believe that violence releases superhuman and extra-normal powers.²⁶ Frederick Hacker says they are deeply disturbed, non-political 'justice collectors seeking remedy for injustice by unrestrained legitimation of all means used in the service of their cause'.²⁷ J.W. Clayton claims that frustration makes terrorists vulnerable to defeatism and leads to 'overly high expectations of an idealized order'.²⁸ Other analysts use relative deprivation theory to balance the psychological bases of frustration-aggression theory with sociological insight. Ted Gurr argues that social conditions may amplify conflict if they raise expectations without increasing the capacity to fulfil them.²⁹ Gurr's relative deprivation theory focuses more squarely on motives and rational concerns than does frustration-aggression theory. However, it offers no substantive explanation of significance because it lacks reference to active terrorists.³⁰ Although examining active terrorists might confirm its claims, the explanatory value of frustration-aggression theory is now limited by difficulties such as participants' memories, their 'editing' of events and accounting for conflicting motives.

Another set of theories is based on a systems theory approach. These analyses view terrorism as a product of poor normative integration and inadequate government response to social problems. Yezekiel Dror says an 'inadequate institutionalization of inputs' leads to violence. He argues that democracies must learn to respond to extra-normal pressures that are 'both a danger of failure with immediate and long-term consequences and an opportunity to re-assert the requisites of a viable democratic capacity to

govern'.³¹ Similarly, Chalmers Johnson argues that terrorism results from 'the degree and nature of a social system's dissynchronization and of the quality and timelessness of the efforts of its ruling elites to rectify the dissynchronization'.³² However, he adds that where 'moral communities' shelter individuals from random violence and supply clear social roles, terrorist violence is 'a form of tyranny, not something to which people can become accustomed and thereby orient their behaviour'.³³ Another systems approach argues that terrorism results from a weak international order and the influence of non-Western values. These analyses allege that state intervention and international support underpin modern terrorism.³⁴ Claire Sterling, for example, contends that the USSR assisted ideologically amenable terrorists during the 1970s and 1980s: 'the whole point of the plan was to let the other fellows do it, contributing to Continental terror by proxy'.³⁵ Her rhetoric exaggerated the threat and was not based on systematic evaluations of cases. In many contexts, terrorism has not threatened democracy or international order.³⁶ Some analyses argue that modern terrorism has especially lethal potential because contemporary democracies have loosened social control. They advocate limited access to communications, transport, weapons and information technologies as a way of preventing nuclear or 'hi-tech' terrorism.³⁷ Other analysts argue that terrorism exposes the dangers of open, reasonable responsive democracies. Yonah Alexander argues that by providing information and ways to attract attention, equal access and pluralism increase the potential for violence.³⁸ His explanation stresses the irresponsibility of techno-terrorists and assumes that *all* governments use technology responsibly. However, it seems unlikely that terrorists would annihilate the political system with reference to which they articulate demands.

Another category of theories focuses on rights and ideologies. The best-known analyst of this school is Walter Laqueur, who links terrorist violence to socially transformative ideologies. Laqueur's analyses set the paradigm for most literature on terrorism. He argues that the modern and left-radical variant of terrorism in many ways resembles tyrannicide, regicide and revolutionary conspiracy. Laqueur agrees with Anthony Quinton's view that modern terrorism's unrestrained behaviour, indiscriminate targeting, multinational networks and failure to attack dictatorships make it 'a refinement on age-old tactics of intimidation, intrigue and assassination'.³⁹ In this light, Laqueur believes that examining motives is not important:

'left-wing' and 'right-wing' terrorism have more in common than is usually acknowledged. Terrorism . . . was Fascist in the 1920s and 1930s but took a different direction in the 1960s and 1970s. In actual

fact, however, underlying both 'left-wing' and 'right-wing' terrorism there is usually a free-floating activism – populist, frequently nationalist, intense in character but vague and confused.⁴⁰

Irving Horowitz echoes Laqueur's attitude toward motives. He says treating "radicalism" as a revival of participatory democracy and "terrorism" as a simple resort to violence is to miss the essential multinational mix'.⁴¹

Several other theories of rights and ideologies do assess the significance of motives. However, these interpretations also define 'terrorism' broadly and make sweeping generalizations about post-1789 Western politics that render specific contexts superfluous. Noël O'Sullivan says that terrorism is a consequence of the ideological politics that emerged during the French Revolution: 'the modern enemies of limited politics never appear in that role but always present themselves as the champions of "the people", of "true liberty", and of "true democracy"'.⁴² His view is similar to that of Hannah Arendt, who argues that de-sanctifying the human values underlying Western law led to violence and threatens individual rights: 'the means overwhelm the end. If goals are not achieved rapidly, the result will be not merely defeat but the introduction of the practice of violence into the whole body politic'.⁴³ Paul Wilkinson also examines motives. He calls terrorism 'inherently indiscriminate', 'essentially arbitrary and unpredictable' and a denial of 'all rules and conventions of war'. He links terrorists' 'hideous and barbarous cruelties and weapons' to motives such as transcendental ends, regeneration, catharsis, just vengeance or greater evil.⁴⁴ Wilkinson says these motives reflect the influence of Jean-Paul Sartre and Frantz Fanon, 'philosophers of terrorism', whose

almost mystical view of violence as an ennobling and as a morally regenerative force has been widely diffused among revolutionary intellectuals. So too has their advocacy and championship of terrorism. Sartre claims that revolutionary violence is 'man re-creating himself'.⁴⁵

Similarly, Moshe Amon claims that terrorism emerged from the 'ramshackle world of Western civilization, where religion is in a state of crisis and many established myths are losing their meaning and significance'.⁴⁶ He says that violence results from our civilization's loss of coherence and continuity.

Overall, explanations based on assertions about long-term tendencies that affect modern Western civilization do not provide an effective framework to examine specific details or contexts. In particular, they provide no basis to explain violence that is non-revolutionary, provocative or protest-oriented. Since generalizations draw their persuasiveness from a comparison

of cases, the latter type of violence needs substantiation through research on specific examples.⁴⁷ The above literature does not proceed in this fashion. It is based on an indiscriminate identification of 'terrorism' across diverse settings that obscures difference. In so doing, it ultimately hinders explanation by failing to distinguish typologies that are 'different from every other, both in content and in organization'.⁴⁸ A comparison of cases should be preceded by research on factors such as ideology, history, international conditions, and organization. Without these foundations, the above theories explain the impact of terrorism better than they evaluate its significance. A general explanation would have to account for the different results shown by a cursory examination of apparently similar cases. Uruguayan terrorism, for example, led to ten years of military authoritarianism. The Italian extreme-leftists who emulated it actually helped to strengthen democracy. A general theory would help explain why democracy was strengthened in one context but weakened in another. It would also account for groups that do not try to overthrow governments. Beyond this, the wide variety of cases throws the possibility of formulating a satisfactory general theory into doubt. Ignoring such issues, most analysts link terrorist violence to the unexpected. Laqueur contends that modern terrorism 'is directed almost exclusively against permissive democratic societies and ineffective authoritarian regimes'.⁴⁹ His comparison ignores context and the relative rarity of truly lethal terrorism in Western democratic systems.

Not all the literature on terrorism is hampered by broad generalization. Some analysts have provided insights that were used to develop the approach employed in this discussion. In particular, the approach is based on Furet's argument that the threat of violence seems palpable; 'where power is abstract, government occurs through impersonal norms, and complex procedures exist to substantiate a popular presence, the terrorist substitutes the concrete universe of incarnated power'.⁵⁰ This study is also informed by Edwy Plenel's view that examining motives and ideology may help 'take the exact – social, political, ideological – measure of the phenomenon'.⁵¹ Peter Merkl, by responding to the weakness of general explanations with specificity, helped substantiate Plenel's general statements. Identifying five types of violent groups in Weimar Germany,⁵² he notes that 'lumping them together in one category of violence against feeble public order is not very helpful . . . attempts at revolutionary uprising . . . [are] . . . obviously different from assassinations and call for different approaches'.⁵³ In addition, this discussion was substantially aided by Hocking's criticism of existing theory and Robin Wagner-Pacifici and Robert Drake's case-studies of the Italian Red Brigades (BR).⁵⁴

The single greatest weakness in social science treatments of political

violence is the lack of conceptual tools. Particularly marked at the level of taxonomical categories, this failing has retarded theoretical development. Although the violent factions we refer to as 'terrorist' have long plagued political life, they have rarely been systematically examined due to two factors. In the first place, mass movements, representative government and democracy are the central concerns in modern Western political thought. Factional violence was always discussed in classical political thought, but largely written off as an anomaly after the late eighteenth century. Secondly, as AD itself illustrates, the secretive character of small conspiratorial groups does not lend itself to systematic examination. AD's small size, lack of mass support and emphasis on elite action made it more like a pre-modern political faction than the formal-legalist organizations that preoccupy modern political science. As a result, analyses of terrorism are methodologically crippled.

The weakness of most analyses has been exacerbated by confusion over the term 'terrorism'. In most analyses, 'terrorism' is defined as a technique: 'the use or threat of violence to effect change in the body politic'.⁵⁵ However, applying the definition to a wide variety of undifferentiated phenomena ignores differences between cases in favour of general explanations that cannot sustain close scrutiny. As a result, the types of political violence incorporated under the rubric 'terrorism' include: the Jacobin terror, suppression of the Paris commune, Russian nihilism, Nazism, the Algerian FLN, the Khmer Rouge and the Lebanese Hezbollah. The vocabulary to differentiate them remains underdeveloped. Beyond indicating that violence is employed to secure generally political goals, 'terrorism' cannot help explain the significance of particular organizations in specific environments. In some cases, violence seriously menaces socio-political order. In others, its impact is symbolic rather than lethal. Despite this, many analyses persistently view 'terrorism' as a threat to the state, 'the primary symbol of political legitimacy, the focus of popular loyalties, and the basis of international order'.⁵⁶ The seriousness of this claim dictates that it be validated with reference to specific goals, motives and context. In all its incarnations, 'terrorism' needs to be distinguished from officially sanctioned violence. The latter is allegedly manageable, manipulable and 'nothing but the continuation of policy with other means'.⁵⁷

Violence is a regrettable, inevitable and persistent part of the Western tradition. Many forms of violence are sanctioned by the distinction that Judeo-Christian culture imposes between social and political violence. The separation disempowers specific groups and, for example, makes violence against women, homosexuals and visible minorities routine. In contrast, 'political violence' draws attention because it attacks patriarchal order. Research on family abuse, sexual violence and peace studies is now

extending knowledge about violence. However, this research does not show that violence is increasing, only that its depth and range are finally being systematically examined. Analogous gaps in historical knowledge hampers many examinations of social and political violence. Extended social services and communications, for example, have unveiled previously tolerated sexual and family violence. However, the lack of long-term information about these phenomena limits evaluation in the same way that the lack of attention given 'terrorism' impedes general explanations of significance and character. What can be said is that the impact of 'terrorism' outstrips that of home, school and workplace violence.⁵⁸ Yet, theories of terrorism generally do not distinguish typologies of violence. They characterize a wide selection of types of violence as lethal and so amalgamate terrorism with cataclysm. In fact, the threat can only be clarified by surmounting 'continuing confusion about its [terrorism's] general significance for modern political life, and in particular about its relationship to the democratic states'.⁵⁹ The task could begin by distinguishing a range of types (fascist, neo-Nazi, Marxist-Leninist and anarchist) and demonstrating the significance of national symbols.⁶⁰

The ultimate impact of terrorist violence lies in its violation of Western beliefs about democracy and representative institutions. This impact overwhelms our knowledge that 'terrorism' in the West is infrequent by comparison to the rest of the globe and other historical periods. Many analyses confound 'terrorism' with 'civil unrest', 'protest' or 'sabotage', even though the threat is not especially lethal:

the number of Americans killed inside the United States in 1985 as the result of terrorist attack was two ... the total number of US civilians killed abroad between 1973 and the end of 1985 was 169 ... more Americans were killed by terrorists in 1974 (22) than in 1984 (16).⁶¹

Examinations tend to ignore that 'the actual amount of violence caused by international terrorism has been greatly exaggerated. Compared with the world volume of violence or with national crime rates, the toll has been small'.⁶² Terrorism has an intense, non-physical, emotional and abstract impact, but this does not necessarily mean that individuals or society are vulnerable. In France, terrorism is a small portion of criminally motivated deaths and injuries.⁶³ Although the average French person is more likely to be raped, robbed or injured on an expressway, terrorism elicits a strong public reaction because it violates symbols of everyday continuity and security.⁶⁴ Terrorism leads to a sense of insecurity that arises from 'an identification with the fate of actual victims to the extent that victims are interchangeable, but does not stem from an analysis of the statistical

frequency of attacks'.⁶⁵ However, a widespread impression that French society is increasingly violent has been accompanied by,

a significant regression in criminal violence ... the evolution of violence has not at all followed the dramatic course that the dominant alarmist discourse would lead us to suppose ... the frequency of murders and assassinations is extraordinarily weak; the mortality rate due to homicide is about one for every one hundred thousand persons (in traditional patriarchal societies, the rate was as much as fifty times higher).⁶⁶

AD has been selected for examination precisely because it is a case in which terrorists threaten socio-political order or indicate significant system dysfunction to a much lesser degree than initial impressions suggest.⁶⁷

Method

This discussion focuses on one case of political violence in a Western system in order to discuss its rational bases and political character. AD is 'rational' in the sense that it consciously chose to behave in a certain manner derived from historical antecedents such as *blanquisme*.⁶⁸ The discussion begins with an overview of French political history in order to show that political violence is a chronic element in that context. After this, the analysis shows that AD's motives and goals follow French revolutionary traditions. The group was trying to carry out a protest 'role' linked to changes that were under way in French political culture in the 1970s and 1980s. These alterations turned AD's revolutionary project into a parody since its goals were not relevant to public debate. As a result, AD failed to menace political order and remained a fringe phenomenon. The recourse to a case approach thus reveals the group's contradictory status: AD was not a lethal threat to France's socio-political order, but drew on a long tradition of violent opposition to the establishment of the day.⁶⁹ The triple focus of the study is designed to avoid the pitfalls of existing analyses. The discussion concentrates on: (1) contextual information and specificity; (2) political changes that set the scene for violence; and (3) the character of one organization. The first section outlines the French revolutionary traditions that reduce politics to physical struggle and provided numerous, and recent, precedents for a rational course of action. The context set the stage for forms of political violence that are either strategic or tactical. While tactical violence secures specific ends, such as national security, independence or revolution, AD used violence strategically. It viewed force as an end in itself and aimed to create fear.

The specificity of AD's case does not provide hypotheses to test against other examples or measure equivalency.⁷⁰ As a result, this analysis does not offer a generic explanation of political violence. The exclusive focus on French political traditions elucidates specific debates and influences. The single-case approach isolates the themes that help to substantiate AD's rationality, such as extreme-left debate on how to battle capitalism. The approach, which made this highly specific ideological interpretation possible, was selected as the only methodology that could clarify the centrality of ideological motives for political violence in France. Ideology is the key that clarifies how AD used 'premeditated and purposeful violence . . . in a struggle for political power'.⁷¹ AD's goals and motives were motivated by a distinct political tradition⁷² that is imbued with universalist values and reflects a unique historical experience. France is one of few Western political cultures that continues to view values derived from a specific historical experience as universally valid. The sense of historical-cultural superiority that imbues France is another element that makes it difficult to compare AD to its fellow 'Euro-terrorists' in Italy and Germany. In the latter two cases, the experience of fascism provided a markedly different set of conditions and attitudes toward the political system. AD's choices were shaped by a political culture in which symbols, legitimacy and institutions emphasize

departure from men's daily routine, a special or heroic quality in the proceedings they are to frame. Massiveness, ornateness and formality . . . are presented upon a scale which focuses constant attention upon the difference between everyday life and the special occasion.⁷³

AD emerged in a period in which ideologies were changing and political consensus growing. The alteration was a highly significant one in twentieth-century French political history. It was embodied by the Mitterrand presidency, a focus on the EC, racism, immigration and the social power of money, and expressed by terms such as *alternance*, *cohabitation* and *ouverture*.⁷⁴ Like the extreme-right *Front national* (FN), AD believed that the shift was a threat to an authentic set of national values. Both groups feared marginalization, distrusted politicians, were deeply anti-American and tried to exploit racism, anti-immigrant sentiments and fear of EC integration.

This discussion characterizes AD as an extreme-left protest faction with a revolutionary vocation. The group contradicts many assumptions about violent political organizations in the literature on terrorism. Accordingly, this text argues that the group is always very left-wing and very French, which limits the possibilities for comparison with other seemingly similar samples. Rather than focusing on comparison, the argument concentrates on a political micro-culture, its meanings, and transmission

of the central elements of those meanings from a more 'elaborated' host political culture. The resulting discussion focuses on how AD concluded that armed opposition was necessary, evaluates its threat and goals, and aims to elucidate a taxonomical category. AD's early attacks were a symbolic protest. Deadly assaults on human beings only became systematic after five years of operation. Early AD (1979–82) was preoccupied by the proletariat. Later, *Action directe nationale* (ADn) was preoccupied by national issues and behaved like a group of politicized criminals. *Action directe internationale* (ADi) had an international orientation, methodically assassinated individuals and wanted to 'reconstitute' the proletariat at a global level. Both sections mirrored French society and, significantly, did not deviate from national ideological-political themes. As a unit, AD recapitulated national ideological traditions. It even split due to differences over national and international influences that also divided the mainstream left. Both ADs believed that revolution was historically necessary and inevitable and that human productive and technological capacities made egalitarianism a social and political imperative. To achieve its end, AD targeted a new global order. It was inspired by May 1968, the wartime resistance movement and French extreme-left traditions, but failed to attract a pool of like-minded groups. Their absence doomed AD's emulation of May 1968 and made it anything but a 'popular force'. ADi tried to circumvent this weakness by posing as an early stage of revolutionary struggle. However, it appeared just as extra-parliamentary organizations lost steam and the mainstream left rose to power.

NOTES

1. Excerpt from 'An Ismaili poem in praise of Fidawis', W. Ivanow, *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, xiv (1938), p.71.
2. 'Tenir compte du sens que les acteurs ont donné eux-mêmes à leur action, et des contraintes ou des normes (fussent-elles monstrueuses) auxquelles il se sont soumis.' Philippe Raynaud, 'Les origines intellectuelles du terrorisme', in François Furet, Antoine Liniers and Philippe Raynaud, *Terrorisme et démocratie* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1983), p.38.
3. Jenny Hocking, 'Orthodox theories of "terrorism": The power of politicised terminology', in *Politics: Journal of the Australasian Political Studies Association*, Vol.19, No.2 (Nov. 1984), pp.103–10, 103.
4. *Ibid.*, p.106.
5. Anthony Arblaster, 'Terrorism: Myths, Meaning and Morals', in *Political Studies*, Vol.XXV, No.3 (Sept. 1977), p.414. Walter Laqueur says 'terrorism is an attempt to destabilize democratic societies and to show that their governments are impotent' ('Reflections on Terrorism', in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.65, No.1 (Fall, 1986), p.87). Richard Clutterbuck defines all states as legitimate and all terrorism as illegal (*Living with Terrorism* (London: Faber, 1975)). For terrorism as an aberration, see Anthony Burton, *Urban Terrorism* (London: Leo Cooper, 1975), p.xvi.
6. Thomas P. Thornton, 'Terror as a Weapon of Political Agitation', in Harry Eckstein (ed.), *Internal War* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p.87.

7. Yezekiel Dror, 'Terrorism as a Challenge to the Democratic Capacity to Govern', in Martha Crenshaw (ed.), *Terrorism, Legitimacy, and Power: The Consequences of Political Violence* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), p.36. For an overview of theories and research, see A.R. Norton and M.H. Greenberg, *International Terrorism: An Annotated Bibliography and Research Guide* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980).
8. Martin Seliger, *Ideology and Politics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976), p.14.
9. Harry Eckstein, 'Case Study and Theory in Political Science', in *Handbook of Political Science: Strategies of Inquiry*, Vol.7 (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), p.97.
10. Arend Lijphart, 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', in *American Political Science Review*, No.65 (Sept. 1971), p.691.
11. C.G. Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Science* (New York: Free Press, 1965), p.299.
12. Lijphart, p.692.
13. Ibid.
14. Eckstein, p.104.
15. Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1964), p.19.
16. Ibid., p.7.
17. Sherry B. Ortner, 'On Key Symbols', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol.75, No.5 (Oct. 1973), p.1340.
18. Lucian Pye, 'Political Culture', *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol.12, p.218.
19. Robin Erica Wagner-Pacifici, *The Moro Morality Play: Terrorism as a Social Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p.4.
20. Ortner, p.1342.
21. Edelman, p.8.
22. Ortner, p.1343.
23. Ibid.
24. Literally: French 'new leftism'. All subsequent references to *gauchisme* appear in the original French.
25. John Dollard, *Frustration and Aggression* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), p.1.
26. 'Problems of the Polistaraxic', in L.Z. Freedman and Y. Alexander (eds), *Perspectives on Terrorism* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1983), p.41.
27. Frederick J. Hacker, 'Dialectical Interrelationships of Personal and Political Factors in Terrorism', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, p.35.
28. John W. Clayton, 'Terrorism and the Psychology of the Self', *ibid.*, p.34.
29. Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), p.13.
30. In contrast, B.E. O'Neill argues that Palestinian violence results from the 'relative deprivation of the Palestinians in exile (especially in the refugee camps) since 1948'. 'Towards a Typology of Political Terrorism: The Palestinian Resistance Movement', in Y. Alexander (ed.), *International Terrorism: National, Regional and Global Perspectives* (New York: Praeger, 1976), p.25.
31. Dror, p.66.
32. Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), pp.163-4.
33. Ibid., p.168.
34. Grant Wardlaw says 'evidence of Soviet support for destabilizing influences in the Western-aligned world is overwhelming but it indicates a capacity of opportunistic exploitation of situations rather than their specific creation and direction'. *Political Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.56.
35. *The Terror Network* (New York: Berkley Books, 1981), p.274. Also see S.T. Francis, *The Soviet Strategy of Terror* (Washington DC: Heritage Foundation, 1981) and Roberta Goren in Jillian Becker (ed.), *The Soviet Union and Terrorism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984). Edward Herman cites US-backed state terrorism and human rights abuse in *The Real Terror Network* (Boston: South End Press, 1982).
36. For a discussion of terrorism and US foreign policy see Noam Chomsky, *The Culture of*

- Terrorism* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1988).
37. Neil Livingstone says technologies 'enhance the arsenals available to terrorists ... [and provide] violence-prone nonstate actors with an almost limitless universe of targets and vulnerabilities to attack. Terrorists, albeit slowly, are learning this fact, and while the modern world has so far escaped a major catastrophe produced by techno-terrorists striking at the very heart of our technological civilization or employing some kind of hi-tech weapon of mass destruction, it is too much to believe that this situation will continue indefinitely'. 'The Impact of Technological Innovation', in Uri Ra'anana et al., *Hydra of Carnage: The International Linkages of Terrorism and Other Low-Intensity Operations* (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1986), p.137.
 38. 'Modern technology has provided terror groups with a critical communications instrument - the media - which willingly or unwillingly serves their specific or general propaganda and psychological warfare needs.' Yonah Alexander, 'Terrorism, the Media and the Police', in R.H. Kupperman and D.M. Trent (eds), *Terrorism: Threat, Reality, Response* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1979). In contrast, Philip Schlesinger, Graham Murdock and Philip Elliott suggest that TV reports contradict terrorist and government ends. P. Schlesinger, G. Murdock and P. Elliott, *Televising 'Terrorism': Political Violence in Popular Culture* (London: Comedia Publishing Group, 1983).
 39. Anthony Quinton, 'Terrorism and Political Violence: A Permanent Challenge to Governments', in *Terrorism, Legitimacy and Power*, p.54.
 40. Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism: A Study of National and International Political Violence* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977), p.147. By myopically concentrating on technique, Laqueur calls the Paris Commune an example of 'terrorism': 'terrorism frequently occurs in cyclical upsurges. The *ère des attentats* in France came twenty years after the Paris Commune, and two decades later there was another, albeit minor, wave of terrorist operations' (*ibid.*, p.86). In fact, terror was used by both sides in the struggle.
 41. Horowitz, p.48.
 42. Noël O'Sullivan, *Fascism* (London: J.M. Dent, 1983). O'Sullivan argues that the French Revolution 'gradually destroyed all the old conventions which surrounded the use of violence in western political life and created a world in which any political act at all can now be done with an easy conscience, since there is no conceivable act which our modern ideologies cannot present as morally defensible'. 'Terrorism, Ideology and Democracy', in Noël O'Sullivan (ed.), *Terrorism, Ideology and Revolution* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), p.10; and 'An Introductory Essay: Revolution and Modernity', in N. O'Sullivan (ed.), *Revolutionary Theory and Political Reality* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983).
 43. Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: A Harvest/HBJ Book, 1969), p.80.
 44. Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State* (2nd edn) (New York: New York University Press, 1986), p.54.
 45. Ibid., p.100.
 46. Moshe Amon, 'The Unravelling of the Myth of Progress', in D.C. Rapoport and Y. Alexander (eds), *The Morality of Terrorism: Religious and Secular Justifications* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p.62.
 47. See for example Michel Wieviorka, 'Analyse de la violence politique', in *Connexions*, 45 (1985).
 48. Morris Edward Opler, 'Themes as Dynamic Forces in Culture', in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol.LI (July 1945), p.198.
 49. Laqueur, *Terrorism*, p.218.
 50. 'Où il y a abstraction du pouvoir, gouvernement de normes impersonnelles, procédures complexes pour mettre en forme la présence du peuple dans le pouvoir, le terroriste substitue l'univers concret du pouvoir incarné.' François Furet, *Terrorisme et démocratie*, p.14.
 51. 'Prendre la mesure exacte - sociale, politique, idéologique - du phénomène.' Edwy Plenel, 'Terrorisme et idéologie en France', in *Etudes Polémologiques*, No.38 (1986), p.7. For similar approaches, see Peter Merkl (ed.), *Political Violence and Terror: Motifs and Motivations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) and the two-volume colloquium on terrorism in France, *Etudes Polémologiques*, Nos 37 and 38 (Paris: Institut Français de Polémologie, 1986).
 52. (1) Left-wing revolutionaries; (2) Freecorps, individual assassins and terrorists; (3) anti-

- occupation and anti-separatist nationalists; (4) anti-Polish violence; and (5) street violence by paramilitary Nazi storm-troopers, communist Red Front and republican Reichsbanner.
53. Merkl, 'Approaches to the Study of Political Violence', in *Political Violence and Terror*, p.21.
 54. See: Wagner-Pacifici; and Robert Drake, 'The Red Brigades and the Italian Political Tradition', in Y. Alexander and K.A. Meyers (eds), *Terrorism in Europe* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).
 55. Thornton, p.71.
 56. Martha Crenshaw, 'Reflections on the Effects of Terrorism', in *Terrorism, Legitimacy, and Power*, p.36.
 57. Clausewitz, 'Note of 10 July 1827', in Michael Howard and Peter Paret (transl. and eds), *On War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p.69.
 58. Globally, 180,000 workplace deaths and 110 million injuries occur yearly; 'les accidents du travail et les maladies professionnelles sont encore terriblement lourds en termes de souffrances humaines et de coût économique. Dans les pays développés, on estime que les pertes – directes et indirectes – qu'ils occasionnent représentent de 1 à 4% du produit national brut.' Although workers' health in the West has greatly improved, technological risks and days lost to illness have risen: 'la nature même de l'insécurité change. La santé physique des travailleurs est bien meilleure qu'il y a cinquante ans, admettent les spécialistes, mais le nombre de journées perdues pour maladies est plus élevé qu'alors' (Francis Blanchard, 'Au travail, risques sans frontières', in *Le Monde diplomatique*, No.386 (May 1986), p.28). Although 17,000 work-related cancer deaths occur yearly in the US (4 per cent of all cancer fatalities), using better technology and enforcing standards is not considered urgent. Over 1,000,000 workplace accidents occur in Canada yearly: one injury every six seconds during the 40-hour week; a working person is disabled every 12 seconds (*Report on Business Magazine*, Toronto, Ontario: Canadian Newspapers Co., Vol.3, No.7 (Jan. 1987)).
 59. O'Sullivan, 'Terrorism, Ideology and Democracy', p.10.
 60. See: A.J. Day (ed.), *Political Dissent: An International Guide to Dissent, Extra-Parliamentary, Guerrilla and Illegal Political Movements* (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1983), and Peter Janke, *Guerrilla and Terrorist Organizations: A World Directory and Bibliography* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983). Day's section on France lists 22 extreme-right, five extreme-left, 15 regionalist and 16 overseas *départements* groups. Janke lists 25 French groups, including the regionalist FLNC (*Front de la Libération Nationale de la Corse*) and Basque *Euzkal Zuzentasuna*, extreme-right *Club Charles Martel* and *Faisceaux Nationaux Européens*, and extreme-left *Action directe*.
 61. Laqueur, 'Reflections on Terrorism', p.87. Terrorism's impact on American audiences was demonstrated in 1986, when tourist traffic between the US and Europe dramatically decreased following a series of attacks.
 62. Brian M. Jenkins, 'International Terrorism: A New Mode of Conflict', in David Carlton and Carlo Shaerf (eds), *International Terrorism and World Security* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), pp.23–4.
 63. In 1983, 948 terrorist attacks in France caused 22 deaths and 234 injuries. In 1984, 908 attacks killed 23 and injured 129. In 1985, 834 attacks killed 23 and injured 154. Eight hundred and thirty-four terrorist attacks are significant, but a small percentage of the 3,579,194 criminal infractions recorded in 1985. Daniel Hermant and Didier Bigo, 'Analyse statistique du terrorisme en France', in *Études polémologiques*, No.37, pp.13–42.
 64. Claude Julien, 'La peur et l'ordre', in *Le Monde diplomatique*, No.386, p.30.
 65. 'Identification avec le sort des victimes réellement touchées dans la mesure où il y a interchangeabilité des victimes, mais il ne repose pas sur une analyse de la fréquence statistique de ces attentats.' *Ibid.*, p.18.
 66. 'Une régression considérable de la violence criminelle... l'évolution de la violence a été loin de suivre le cours dramatique que laisse supposer le discours alarmiste dominant... la fréquence des meurtres et assassinats est extraordinairement faible; le taux de mortalité imputable à l'homicide volontaire est de l'ordre de un pour cent mille habitants (dans les sociétés patriarcales traditionnelles, l'ordre de grandeur est jusqu'à cinquante fois plus élevé).' Jean-Claude Chesnais, 'Quand l'utopie se fait masque', special section 'La peur et l'ordre', in *Le Monde diplomatique*, No.386, p.16.
 67. For a discussion of violent protest and French political traditions see Stanley Hoffmann, 'The Ruled: Protest as a National Way of Life', pp.111–44 in *Decline or Renewal? France since the 1930's* (New York: Viking Press, 1974).
 68. For *blanquisme*, see below, Ch.2.
 69. For analyses that focus on the question of lethal terrorist threats, see William Gutteridge (ed.), *Contemporary Terrorism* (New York: Facts on File, 1986); John F. Murphy, *Punishing International Terrorists: The Legal Framework for Policy Initiatives* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanhead, 1985); Uri Ra'anani et al. (eds), *Hydra of Carnage: International Linkages of Terrorism: The Witnesses Speak* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1986); and Benjamin Netanyahu (ed.), *Terrorism: How the West Can Win* (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1986).
 70. For a similar argument, see Drake, 'The Red Brigades and the Italian Political Tradition'.
 71. Crenshaw, 'Introduction: Reflections on the Effects of Terrorism', in *Terrorism, Legitimacy and Power*, p.2.
 72. See Ch.2 below.
 73. Edelman, p.96.
 74. Respectively, 'alternation', 'living together', and 'opening up the political spectrum'. The terms will be used below in the original French.

2 French Traditions of Political Violence and Protest

The following discussion clarifies the bases for the direct action tactics that AD adopted by outlining the main contextual factors that shaped its stance toward the host political system: the revolutionary tradition in French politics; the 'classic' political order of the Third Republic; and the Fifth Republic consensus. All three influences provided the foundations upon which extreme-left terrorism took root in the late 1970s. Through an outline of these influences, the rise of extreme-left terrorism can be referred to French concepts of political legitimacy, the 'actors, objectives, capabilities and certain stable aspects of the environment that attend the application of capabilities'.¹ As a result of the above influences, AD adopted a revolutionary 'vocation' that was explicitly linked to protest traditions and a distinct idea of legitimacy. Revolutionary opposition to the political establishment has in fact long functioned as an unexceptional component of the 'exceptional' political culture formed through France's original and complex history.

The influence of the 1789 revolution

Distinct geographical, historical and cultural influences shaped France's political traditions. At the most fundamental level, a history of strong central authority shaped protest against a state that usually functions as 'no mere instrument of a sovereign general will nor an arbiter among people but a positive good in itself, the bearer of values greater than the sum of individuals who made it up'.² The political system made little provision for independent cultural, social or political organization. Post-revolutionary institutions moreover generally embodied very specific notions of prestige, education and status:

The bourgeoisie triumphed through a battle, and the battle explains both the continuation of industrial development as an element of bourgeois drive and the energy with which the bourgeoisie defended

itself against any push from the new lower class, the proletariat. The aristocracy has offered a long and heated resistance: hence both the bitter equalitarian suspiciousness which pervaded French society and the deep impact which the aristocratic values nevertheless made on the bourgeoisie and even on workers' attitudes.³

The dramatic break of 1789 rendered all subsequent political regimes prey to revision by revolution. Without the unifying symbol of a monarchy, both right and left traditionally viewed legitimacy as conditional and historical, an attitude that endowed public life with a radical capacity that AD believed it could still exploit in the 1980s. In the traditional political culture, both ideological camps also bore mutually exclusive concepts of legitimacy that

are fundamentally built on the opposition between the partisans of a hierarchical society and the supporters of an egalitarian one . . . a main line in French political life, even though its criteria evolve and the equilibrium varies.⁴

In French political culture, Anglo-American reformism has long appeared as one stance among a group of alternatives. Political struggles were often resolved by force in the nineteenth century. Both the extreme-right and extreme-left repeatedly used violence to secure their interests and make themselves heard.

From 1789 to 1914, no government is acceptable for all citizens. Two irreducible legitimacies confront one another. A large part of the country remains faithful to the monarchical principle of the old regime: it wants a king who could take up again the dynasty that was driven from the throne in 1792. Another part is impassioned by the new principle of national sovereignty: it calls for power based on universal suffrage and public freedoms. They slaughtered each other as much for political regimes' as class interests.⁵

Despite the association of revolutionary change to the year 1789, the victory of republicanism over its anti-republican and ultra-royalist opponents did not occur until about 1880. Many parts of the left were by this point deeply suspicious of the political establishment and the practice of compromise. For its part, the right did not trust left-wing intentions, and focused on the example of the 1793–94 terror:

The two camps were not only opposed over national management and development, but also over fundamental values. Between the *Enragés* ['fanatics'] and the *Ultras* ['ultra-royalists'] there was no common ground, only a mutual wish to finish one another off.⁶

The left was locked out of power and actively persecuted in 1794, 1815, 1848 and 1871. When it did form a government, it tended to turn on its enemies.⁷ The radical dichotomy between right and left that AD later insisted upon was hardly aberrant. On the contrary, it has been one of the most persistent features of the post-1789 political culture. At the same time, French society remained 'profoundly conservative in its modes of organization and its models of human relations . . . with a taste for revolt and a long tradition of utopian protest'.⁸ The centralized state inherited from the old regime and reinforced by Napoleon combined with revolutionary predilections for political utopianism. Public institutions were fragile, and became even more so if the status quo did not entail socio-political advantage for certain political players. As AD did later, frustrated groups turned to sustained, rhetorically radical, and physically violent protest. Dramatic action, a method legitimated by the revolution, became a favourite tool for testing the strength of the authorities.⁹ If the state could not reinstate order, participants demanded better institutions. The resulting political culture was characterized by:

addiction, not merely to revolutionary talk, but to violence (to a degree considerably superior to what could be found even in industrial relations). In other words, the degree of willingness to observe the rules of the game when results fail to give satisfaction to the claims of the 'political strata' is low.¹⁰

Post-1789 French political culture was also influenced by the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In particular, his focus on the allegedly direct democracy in the Greek *polis* nourished the ideal of a small, self-sufficient republic based on untutored participation. Nostalgia for organic community links and the consensus loss after 1789 led to the use of classical Greek symbols to legitimize authority. Rousseau's ideas were also translated into policy. The *Comité du salut public*¹¹ prescribed the creation of rational social and political institutions: 'in the interest of the people the state was to be interventionist, offering social services; it was to plan and guide the institutions of the country, using legislation to lift up the common man'.¹² The principles in the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme*¹³ were to be secured by education.¹⁴

Utopian egalitarianism thus had long-term influence on attitudes toward the political system. A split between left-wing advocates of liberty and equality in the 1790s further multiplied ideologies. Both wings of the left thereafter spread ideas that synthesized with traditionalist and modernist social concepts in an ambiguous manner:

France is perhaps the only country in Europe that never really accepted the great break, the great intellectual, scientific and political

reversal carried out in Enlightenment Scotland toward the end of the eighteenth century, a reversal that wanted itself to be – and really was – the birth act of modernity. Economic science, utilitarian philosophy and the political theory of liberalism all appeared at this time.¹⁵

In France, left-wing movements based on libertarian and egalitarian ideas competed with other groups that had traditionalist values. Left-wing nostalgia for a small-scale political order resulted in ambiguous attitudes toward religion, the family, mass migration, political representation, technology and urban industrialism. By referring authority to a romantic vision of the classical Greek city states, revolutionaries tried to create a consensus. However, this classicism was hardly 'modernist' since the economic, social and cultural management of an imperfect, changeable and unacceptable nature contradicted the static equilibrium of the small-scale republic. The juxtaposition of tradition and modernization with liberty and equality greatly influenced perceptions of legitimacy.¹⁶

The 1789 revolution spawned a group of ideologies: *jacobinisme*, *bonapartisme*, *ultra-royalisme*, *orléanisme*, *blanquisme*, socialism and republicanism.¹⁷ These ideologies were not always easily distinguishable. Bonapartism, for example, blended right- and left-wing elements into an imperial style, foreign adventures and populist grandiosity. Republicanism varied greatly. Liberal republicans respected the will of *le peuple*¹⁸ but feared social disruption. Democrats were sensitive to popular susceptibilities and less afraid of disruption. Republican social reformers, on the other hand, idealized populism. Each faction refused to be dominated by the others. These divisions in turn contributed to the formation of yet more splinters. All the while, counter-revolutionaries, socialists and, later, communists alternatively assumed the protest role. Opposition groups rarely formulated solutions to problems. Typically, they attempted to do just what AD later tried: paralyse public life and discredit the establishment. Political, social and economic problems were supposed to be solved by a central authority, as they were to have been under the old monarchy.

The spectacle itself is part of the whole drama of French authority, for the leader's act is performed in a way that perpetuates non-participation – both because of his own way of turning the show into a monologue addressed to the whole people, instead of channeling the structured participation of his supporters either in totalitarian or in democratic 'face-to-face' organizations, and because his insolent 'personal power' confirms his adversaries in their own purely negative association and in their distrust of strong leadership.¹⁹

Modernization exerted a profound influence on political behaviour by

spawning fundamental social and ideological differences. Throughout the nineteenth century, groups supported regimes on the basis of social changes that they made. Institutions were always fragile because 'social consensus was not enough – a political consensus was missing; there was no agreement either on the objectives for which political power is to be used, or on the procedures through which disputes over such objectives can be resolved'.²⁰ Leadership and national authority fluctuated between periods of 'routine' authority, deadlock and immobility. If inertia developed, it was typically surmounted by a charismatic political hero who articulated a new consensus. Ironically, the mutable political culture was not as fragile as institutions and governments. Attitudes towards politics were unaffected by the many reorganizations of public life. The rationalist activism of political groups and France's geographic location provided interior and exterior pressures that prevented a complete paralysis of public life. Further complicating the scenario, post-1789 ideologies co-existed with pre-revolutionary Roman legal, Catholic, feudal and absolutist traditions. Monarchists and republicans agreed that an interventionist state should safeguard France's international stature. Since it established a minimal consensus and divided society less than other regimes, republicanism was slowly consolidated as the dominant public ideology. A republican regime excluded fewer groups and so alleviated the impact of alienated sectors that could seek revenge on incumbents. On the positive side, all of these influences endowed the state with historical flexibility (since alternatives existed) and structured the revolutionary-counter-revolutionary dispute:

all of nineteenth-century French history could be considered as the history of a struggle between the Revolution and the Restoration, through certain episodes that occurred in 1815, 1830, 1848, 1851, 1870, the Commune and 16 May 1877. Only the victory of the republicans over monarchists at the beginning of the Third Republic conclusively signified the victory of the Revolution throughout the country.²¹

Because they viewed regimes as imperfect preludes to authentic revolution or counter-revolution, many participants were profoundly suspicious of authority and jealous of individual rights. Although society was highly stable and the state powerfully centralized, popular discontent occasionally culminated in upheaval:

conflicts between individuals in a group or between groups will be much less resolved than stifled, 'arbitrated', perhaps temporarily assuaged, and quite likely perpetuated, by resort to higher authority.

When protest occurs, it often expresses the same institutional intolerance of conflict in reverse, through demands for radical and definitive settlement or through dreams of frictionless harmony.²²

These divisions had long-term effects on the political culture in which AD later developed. The left is still divided between libertarian and egalitarian interpretations of socialism. The radical egalitarianism that influenced AD is most directly associated with Auguste Blanqui. The rise of *blanquisme* under the Second Empire set a significant precedent:

What was important for Blanqui was to take power and impose revolution on the rest of France through a Parisian dictatorship. To achieve this, he did not count on the working class at all since he did not judge it mature enough, but rather on a team of professional revolutionaries, devoted body and soul to the Cause; the labouring classes would then become the support for this revolutionary dictatorship, which would apply communist principles and spread them abroad.²³

Repeated alternation between empire, restoration, constitutional monarchy and republic produced many political models. From 1789 to 1880, controversies over institutions and values repeatedly led to violence. Regimes were established in reaction to their predecessor:

During the nineteenth century, each new regime fundamentally repudiated its predecessor, set itself up on its debris and drew its legitimacy from this rejection – even if, by doing so, it referred itself to the regime before the preceding as in a game of leap-frog: the Restoration with the old regime, the Second Republic with the Convention, Napoleon III with the Empire, the Third Republic with the French Revolution.²⁴

The 1789 revolution generated ideologies that still resonate in national political life. *Jacobinisme*, the most important ideological product of 1789, was 'in effect the party of the French Revolution . . . A radical was one who professed a loyalty towards the French Revolution that was analogous to that of royalists for their king'.²⁵ The Jacobins used the nation as a new political symbol. Under their influence, 'France has ideas as a means of expression and sign while under the king it had persons, whether physical or moral, as its means of expression and sign . . . The French nation is a missionary nation, bearing a message'.²⁶ The nation was a symbol of political unity, rights and equality that replaced the ancient link between the monarch and people. The nation placed the people above monarchical

privileges based on region, class, occupation, religion and economics. The Jacobins were egalitarian, individualist and rationalist: 'the real Jacobin can be recognized since, from time to time, he says to himself: "I am clearly the only pure one"'.²⁷ By using the people and nation, the Jacobins anchored nationalism and republicanism in public life. The nationalist view of language, custom and religion transformed traditional divisions into foci for unity. The revolutionaries used the symbol of the nation to rally the population to defend France against foreign invasion. In doing so, they also broadened their legitimacy: 'the Revolution started by preaching fraternity among peoples, and a common crusade against wicked governments . . . [but] . . . ended, however, by confining true fraternity to Frenchmen and French subjects'.²⁸ Jacobin universalism soon conflated humanity with the nation, 1789 with republicanism, and tied revolutionary ideals to a historical state. To replace social rank and productive or territorial associations, the Jacobins organized clubs that spread republican and nationalist ideas: 'learned societies conflicted with natural or interest groups insofar as men met there to discuss, criticize, stir ideas, act through ideas'.²⁹ They launched a pan-European revolutionary crusade against oppressive aristocracies in the name of equality, liberty and fraternity.

Like Jacobinism, socialism joined the French ideological constellation after 1789. Socialist thought was strongly affected by the idea that the revolution evinced the inevitable rise of the masses. Saint-Just said socialism introduced 'happiness . . . a new idea in Europe'.³⁰ Jacobinism and socialism combined into an egalitarianism that advocated 'a minimum of happiness for everyone, the potential for everyone to know those goods proper to human existence'.³¹ The clash between this socialist egalitarianism and traditionalism placed religious and metaphysical quarrels at the centre of public life.

The socialist ideal is never exhausted by the realization of a particular end, while radical ideals underwent a crisis that still continues as a result: neither is the Christian ideal exhausted by a particular success, such as the life of a saint . . . While radicalism seeks to more or less peacefully eliminate religion, socialism aspires to replace it.³²

The disestablishment of Catholicism accompanied the articulation of secular government principles and pushed several groups into a counter-revolutionary stance.³³ The ideological, institutional and educational struggles that ensued from the loss of consensus in 1789 were a pattern that later conditioned AD's attitude towards political action and the system as a whole.³⁴

The classic French regime: The Third and Fourth Republics

The Third Republic expressed the classical post-1789 political balance: institutions were accepted as a workable compromise. However, the regime was not based on a viable consensus. The threat of revolutionary revision was 'provisionally' suspended and the Third Republic became the most long-lived post-revolutionary regime. Deeply rooted in political, social and cultural attitudes, political institutions coalesced the *haute bourgeoisie*,³⁵ lower middle class artisans, shopkeepers and peasantry. All of these groups favoured pre-industrial values and were averse to 'modernist' techniques and pragmatism.³⁶ However, the coalition was ill-adapted to urban industrialism. It resisted economically based decision-making, viewed work as a *social* activity, and preserved values such as the family, thrift, historically accumulated prestige and individualism. As a result, new technology was adopted reluctantly, labour-intensive methods were favoured and industry concentrated on the production of luxury goods. The new industrial labour force and bourgeoisie were pushed into opposition to the regime. They aroused the establishment's fears of losing interests, positions, 'old freedoms' and 'inherent rights'.³⁷

To minimize change and avoid potential upheavals, Third Republic political institutions restricted the executive, excluded socio-economic alternatives and precluded dominance by any single party. Hierarchy and political *immobilisme*³⁸ were masked by equalitarian rhetoric. Plebiscites perpetuated a myth of the people and focused attention on change. The repeated resolution of crises fed a belief that the regime, though imperfect, was better than the available alternatives. At the pinnacle of power, charismatic figures periodically addressed monologues to the nation and perpetuated norms of non-participation:

the leader, an outsider who breaks in when the routine has broken down and the rituals have crumbled, has the double prestige of rebellion and prowess; he is the man who reasserts individual exploits after and against the impersonal, anonymous greyness of routine authority.³⁹

Counter-revolutionaries and the extreme left continually attempted to upset the Third Republic social equilibrium.⁴⁰ Intellectuals viewed revolution and the progression of national consciousness as principles that governed development of collective life. Under the influence of socialism and nationalism, political thought became a 'quest for new general systems . . . the recapturing of mastery over history by finding its intellectual key'.⁴¹ Intellectual protest centred on universal human goals:

The republican tradition, even and especially when it wants to

integrate modernity, in fact more or less consciously refuses the break that Anglo-Saxons entirely acknowledge. We fully saw this concerning political forms: the principle of government by the people was always superimposed over simple 'guarantees' of individual rights.⁴²

Opposition attitudes also reflected *immobilisme*. Direct parliamentary conflict was rare since the concerned parties were either physically absent or entrenched in maximal positions. Long negotiations that entailed questioning positions and compromise were associated with 'selling out'. Deadlocks were not resolved by recourse to principles but by appeals to charismatic authoritarians (such as Boulanger, MacMahon, Clemenceau and Pétain):

conflicts are referred to a higher central authority . . . power is delegated to it so that the drama of face-to-face personal relations can be avoided but only in order that, and as long as, the exercise of power from above remains impersonal and curtailed both in scope (subject-matter) and intensity (means of action) by general rules, precedents, and inhibitions.⁴³

In many respects, the regime was profoundly anti-democratic and authoritarian. The episodic character of routine and influence of charisma hampered the development of political movements based on mass mobilization. Many social groups remained on the political fringe until the early 1930s. At the same time, the differentiation of behaviour into degrees of compromise or opposition to the regime gave resilience to the Third Republic political culture. To this day, the French distrust definitive solutions and 'managerial' government.

Crisis, as a privileged means of bringing about change, may indeed be considered as the basic cultural trait conditioning the Frenchman's favourite style of collective action. In the strategy of human relations to which the French are accustomed, this style is characterized by a deep and constant opposition between the individual and the group: the group is perceived and experienced as an organ for defence and protection whose activities can only be negative, while it is for the individual himself to find new means of self-assertion.⁴⁴

Only on foreign policy issues did the Third Republic successfully establish a consensus that synthesized national history. This was possible because all groups had 'the same identifying belief – that France was a pace-setter for the rest of the world'.⁴⁵ Foreign policy was based on a Roman ideal that also affected the old regime: belief that military power

and extent of national territory reflected influence and greatness. Military defeat and annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 provoked deep uneasiness, fear of Germany and led to alliances as a way to ensure territorial integrity and prestige. After the First World War, the French even supported appeasement, a British Tory policy that contradicted national interests, due to fatigue and reluctance to prepare for another war. The ensuing disaster ended the Third Republic and threw France's international credibility into serious doubt.

In setting up the post-war Fourth Republic, the French were obsessed by restoring their credibility and independence of action. The principles that underlay the new republic thus reacted both to Vichy and the Third Republic. The constitution attempted to block the charismatic embodiment of power by a new Pétain by making the Assemblée Nationale the centre of government and by instituting universal suffrage (absent in the Third Republic).⁴⁶ Nationalism was discredited as a political symbol and replaced by democracy. The right was tainted by collaboration even though the wartime resistance movement acknowledged that the Nazis exploited a mostly passive nation and that 1944 was a human, not French, victory. The once marginal PCF embodied resistance and liberation. Unity was provided by de Gaulle. Even though he left direct political activity in 1946, condemned party machinations and claimed he was external to political games, de Gaulle founded a powerful right-wing movement. The SFIO (*Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière* – French section of the Workers' International), MRP (*Mouvement républicain populaire* – Popular Republican Movement, a small progressive Catholic party) and PCF governed in coalition from 1944 to 1946. This *tripartisme*⁴⁷ declined as the national emergency faded and political in-fighting and US anti-communist pressure grew. Under the leadership of Guy Mollet, the SFIO opposed PCF Stalinism and allied with the non-Gaullist right. The centre-left MRP wanted socio-economic change but was constrained by its anti-Marxist progressive Catholic electorate.⁴⁸

The French state meanwhile urgently needed new institutions, public support, systematic reconstruction policies and a consistent foreign policy. Socio-political tension rose over inadequate housing, transport, poor access to higher education, weak unions, uneven modernization,⁴⁹ and a political system that disenfranchised a large minority. It grew throughout the 1950s. The absence of foreign policy consensus made France dependent on US military and financial patronage. Many transformations were started in this period: (1) decolonization; (2) new military-civilian relations; (3) renewed nationalism; and (4) development of consensually based institutions. New policies focused on economic reform, the EEC, *force de frappe*,⁵⁰ industrial and urban modernization, and international economic

competition. Renault was nationalized. The PCF and CGT (*Confédération Générale du Travail* – General Workers' Confederation) participated in planning. The CNPF (*Conseil National du Patronat Français* – National Council of French Employers), a pre-war centre of anti-unionism and anti-modernization sentiment, was discredited by collaboration. However, conservative and liberal Third Republic politicians rapidly upstaged the 'modernizers' and *immobilisme* returned in the 1950s. Traditional business thus benefited from Marshall Plan investment while state sectors failed to lead development. These factors confirmed extreme-left views that nothing had fundamentally changed and representative government simply masked capitalist domination.

After 1924, Third Republic politicians had routinely ruled by decree to circumvent conservative Senate majorities. The practice was effective but discredited democratic institutions. Fourth Republic institutions were designed to overcome this problem by ending factionalism and reinvigorating party competition. Unfortunately, aside from Pierre Mendès-France's government (June 1954–February 1955), inertia persisted and right–left competition did not lead to consensus. A 'regime of parties' favoured parliamentary intrigue over national interests. It generated a diffuse and inconsistent authority that depended on alliances: 25 governments rose and fell between 1946 and 1958.⁵¹ Cabinets were unable to concur over problems and solutions.⁵² High-priority policies were shelved to preserve coalitions. The Fourth Republic became vulnerable to discontent, especially after the extreme-right re-emerged in the 1950s.⁵³ By selectively supporting or resisting reforms, a number of social sectors effectively sabotaged institutions. Army leaders, for example, were generally republican, but believed decolonization threatened national prestige. The prospect of withdrawal from Algeria mortally wounded the Fourth Republic. Army traditionalists believed that they had to protect civilians from terrorism in Algeria and provide balance for domestic instability, incoherence and crisis. Contradictory government policy, lack of alternatives and cabinet and parliamentary fiascos hardened their resolve. Politicians followed two contradictory paths:

One is the war matched with repression: abroad, it leads to Suez while domestically it brings them to tolerate torture. The other response is the search for a diplomatic solution that does not call itself one and that, from the corridors of the UN to the 'good offices' of the US, passing by Rabat and Tunis, seems bereft of a clearly defined objective.⁵⁴

The public feared a neo-Francoist coup and *pétainisme*,⁵⁵ but also 'drastic changes in France's economic and international positions'⁵⁶ to accommodate a diminished international stature, colonial crisis and US indifference.

The Fifth Republic

Initially fashioned on the basis of de Gaulle's criticism of the previous two republican regimes, the Fifth Republic was consciously designed to resolve the contradictory tendencies in post-1789 French political history. This effort explains why Fifth Republic institutions aroused the long-term hostility of both extreme-left and extreme-right groups. In particular, it mixed elements that both groups opposed – an 'authoritarian' presidency and parliamentarianism. The regime also explicitly attempted to polarize political stances and forces, a factor that explains the vehemence of protest movements such as *gauchisme* and the FN. Aside from propelling de Gaulle into power, 'the two fundamental purposes that underlay the establishment of the Fifth Republic were most certainly to resolve the Algerian problem and to remake the state'.⁵⁷ The new institutions were initially identified with de Gaulle and the Gaullist movement, and were openly used to weaken the left:

the Gaullists were above all concerned with establishing institutions and procedures which could be both efficient and autonomous. Their critique of parliamentarianism was essentially that the Third and Fourth Republics had been too divided and weak to control the production, consumption and international functions which the state needed to assume out of necessity in an advanced capitalist society operation within a complex world economy.⁵⁸

Only after the Algerian war ended in 1962 did direct presidential elections incorporate mass participation into political institutions. Legitimacy was then enhanced by separation of powers, clarification of presidential authority and establishment of a *Conseil constitutionnel*.⁵⁹ Before this, it was unclear whether the Fifth Republic was a personal vehicle or hybrid: 'for years this constitution was the object of gloss "exegeses" that reduced it neither to a parliamentary nor to a presidential regime'.⁶⁰ The regime was unusual in French political history since it sought 'to transform neither human nature nor society. The consensus included the main left- and right-wing political groups, excluding only extremes'.⁶¹ In one sense, the new republic was *orléaniste* (a French version of the nineteenth-century British political system) because it blended institutional primacy: 'an intermediary between a limited monarchy and the classic parliamentary regime, of which the 1830 Charter and Louis-Philippe d'Orléans are a very good example'.⁶² Most significantly, the new constitution drew political conflict off the street. After two centuries of struggle, the regime institutionalized right–left coexistence by making

theoretical '*cohabitation*' possible. De Gaulle, in 1964, rejected a

pure presidential system because (a) in France, it was likely to lead to a paralysis of power, to an insoluble deadlock between President and Parliament, and (b) it would in fact result in a weak President, capable of governing only by yielding to the 'will of the parties'.⁶³

The left was pushed out of power for 20 years due to de Gaulle's charisma and its association with the Fourth Republic. The PCF weathered the shock relatively well⁶⁴ but the SFIO, Radicals and MRP fell apart.⁶⁵ The PSU (*Parti socialiste unifié* – Unified Socialist Party) claimed the left-wing *contestataire*⁶⁶ heritage, intellectually challenging the regime and mediating between the mainstream and extra-parliamentary left.⁶⁷ All the while, the new institutions decreased revolutionary rhetoric, parliamentarianism, policy paralysis and suspicion.

De Gaulle and his supporters have attempted to control and channel these processes of political change in two ways. The first of these has been to continue to attack the foundations of the traditional system; the second has been to construct partial alternatives especially geared to take advantage of the changing circumstances.⁶⁸

All political parties changed after the Assemblée Nationale was weakened by new legislative procedures, votes of confidence and the end of parliamentary supremacy. The left's revolutionary orientations diminished after it made a strong 1965 presidential challenge and gains in the 1967 legislative elections. However, left-wing reformism helped spark *gauchisme*, an extreme-left movement that rejected compromise with Gaullism.⁶⁹ *Gauchisme* introduced new issues (feminism, environmentalism, regionalism and gay rights) and was embraced by Maoist, Trotskyist and anarchist organizations: 'multiple, protean, ready to confront each other, each incarnating the true revolution in relation to which the others are traitors'.⁷⁰ However, the Fifth Republic proved able to integrate discontent: contraception, abortion, urban reform, open government, decentralization, regionalization and telecommunication reforms soon became mainstream policies.⁷¹

Gauchisme ultimately failed because the French people rejected class-based politics and revolution. In their place, the Fifth Republic offered political alternatives in the late 1960s and 1970s. The change was soon reflected in party structures. The SFIO and Left Radicals merged into the PS. Jacques Chirac's followers formed the *Rassemblement pour la République* – RPR – Rally for the Republic, which was ideologically and organizationally inspired by Gaullism. The *Union pour la Démocratie Française* (UDF – Union for French Democracy) coalesced liberals and the centre-right.⁷² These changes to party organization complemented

post-war modernization by altering the party system, public institutions, and foreign and defence policy.⁷³ The evolution of the international economy now limited unilateral domestic policy choices and made consensus an indispensable base from which to secure national economic well-being.⁷⁴ This is why the new multipartisan Gaullist consensus, by minimizing the role of parties, soothed a public that was disillusioned by 1940 and the Fourth Republic. By defining national goals, de Gaulle expressed a widespread view that the Third Republic style of parliamentarianism, 'floating on a deeply divided people, in the middle of a terribly dangerous universe, revealed itself in no condition to ensure continuity in public affairs'.⁷⁵ The widespread public desire for continuity was thus integrated into political life as never before since 1789. De Gaulle's system forced parties into blocs:

The power and stability of government was built on the existence of a disciplined majority in parliament that would remain in place until the deputies' mandates expired. Possessing the Executive and controlling the Legislative, it draws its power from electors and returns it to their hands in the next ballot. Having the means to act, it cannot evade the responsibility for results.⁷⁶

In the Fifth Republic, parties must collaborate to capture the centre of power: the presidency.⁷⁷ The system is a 'separation of powers with a strong head of state who is an arbiter', a 'parliamentary regime that is finally made to function correctly'.⁷⁸ Electoralism and the promise of power thus discipline parties: 'the originality of the Fifth Republic is therefore equally to have sketched out the structure of an opposition that, on the eve of some elections, could be thought to be about to take power'.⁷⁹ As the left realized it had a chance of winning power, its systematic opposition to Gaullism gave way to a strategy of electoral competition.

Unlike the Third and Fourth Republics, the Fifth Republic is based on a separation of powers. It has been called 'a new form of "mixed government", for which, from Aristotle to Montesquieu, political philosophy has long wished'.⁸⁰ Although the National Assembly is modelled on the British House of Commons, 'government does not originate in Parliament'.⁸¹ The president appoints government leaders, but retains legislative and cabinet prerogatives: 'The game of parliamentary formations is not in itself so different from that which it was under preceding regimes; but the source of power is no longer in the game and this difference, deliberate and imposed in all details by the 1958 constitution, is absolutely essential'.⁸²

Unlike their predecessors under previous republican regimes, directly elected Fifth-Republic presidents are the centre of political life. The office is

placed 'above the parties' and empowered to represent effectively the unity rather than the diversity of the national community . . . the text of the new constitution puts the office of the president first among the organs of government, immediately after the tribute to the principle of popular sovereignty.⁸³

The president 'heads' government and the nation, sets policy orientations, but does not directly govern.⁸⁴ The office retains exclusive prerogatives over defence and foreign policy to guard 'national interests'. To prevent partisan politics from overriding national interest, de Gaulle injected institutions with a strong dose of authoritarianism. The system thus blends *bonapartisme* (a populist mix of Louis XIV's traditionalism and Jacobinism) and *orléaniste* constitutional monarchism. The president is able to set a public 'mood' while cabinet defines concrete policy. Although presidents are in principle 'non-partisan', they effectively have the prerogative to exclude certain issues from political debate. Finally, for the first time in French history, institutions are guided by a 'Constitutional Council that ensures that legislators respect the essential principles'.⁸⁵ Created to prevent rule by decree and protect citizens, the Council is a move away from Roman-Napoleonic legal traditions in which rights are subordinate to law. Under the Fifth Republic, 'the law loses its sacred character and constitutes a category of legal acts'.⁸⁶

Due to its authoritarian aspects, the left feared that the new regime would make de Gaulle a new Napoleon, Boulanger, MacMahon or Pétain. However, since the left could only systematically oppose de Gaulle by cooperating with the traditionalist right, its daily actions often contradicted rhetoric: 'the socialists are in principle in the opposition, but the General's [de Gaulle's] Algerian policy wins them over rather often'.⁸⁷ Pushed into an opposition 'ghetto', left-wing ideology stagnated: 'it views itself as hope. In fact, hope is always a bit messianic'.⁸⁸ Any opportunity to exercise government responsibility that would have moderated ideology was excluded by Gaullist centralization.⁸⁹ Despite this, the left gradually came to accept institutions as 'neutral' mechanisms for social, political and economic change and evolved into 'forces for proposal, support or anti-establishment activity, electoral shift workers more than the centre of power. The contrast with previous republics, whose history is confused with that of party doctrines, alliances, ruptures and setbacks, is profound'.⁹⁰ The left realized that compromise was the only way to counter Gaullist charisma and the General's ability to provide the stability that the French so sorely wanted:

De Gaulle's independent foreign policies attracted much tacit left-wing support, especially within the Communist Party. Gaullism also

appealed to a quite different left-wing strain which could be called the 'modernizers'. De Gaulle and progressive left-wing technocrats had similar approaches to the problems of nationalization of industry, state economic planning, and economic growth.⁹¹

The opposition parties were for a long time only able to unite temporarily over specific issues. The *force de frappe*, for example, was an

occasion for the crystallization of all the different oppositions to Gaullism. Firstly, it mobilized all those who were opposed to the atomic weapon: at the same time, the scrupulous left and the financial right. The scrupulous left joined this group because atomic weapons and atomic disintegration are not very pleasant perspectives for humanity. The financial right opposed the force because it is extremely expensive. It also mobilized those opposed to the general's policy of non-integration: therefore the opposition of all 'Europeans'. And finally, in a more general manner, the force mobilized the opposition of those who were anti-Gaullists and against the Elysée's policies.⁹²

The Fifth Republic pushed the *poujadistes*⁹³ and extreme right military that plagued the Fourth Republic to the political fringe. Algerian independence moved the army to France and removed the physical base for the anti-republican military faction. After this, military reforms encouraged a technological elite (as in the *force de frappe*) over conventional forces. Aristocratic army leaders were replaced by pro-Gaullist ones. Several other sources of traditional extreme-right strength were weakened after church-state relations were codified, financial aid granted to religious schools, fiscal reform increased economic competition and the moderate right consolidated into a Gaullist party.

One of the principal bases upon which de Gaulle forged a consensus was through a type of political philosophy that articulated a 'national vocation'. His idea was to provide a foreign policy that would diffuse the dangers of revolution, Americanization and communism. De Gaulle believed that a state-based world order would soon render blocs and alliances obsolete. His international policies strove to sidestep the bipolar post-war world order by concentrating on decolonization, development of French nuclear capabilities, the EEC, ties to underdeveloped states, détente and independence from the US. The international commitments that were to ensure French greatness included a military presence in Africa, special ties to Quebec and enhancement of *la francophonie*. Traditional anti-German nationalism was replaced by pragmatism, trans-Rhine *rapprochement* and scepticism over US efforts to 'manage' conflicts.

The strategy reinterpreted the system of foreign alliances that the French turned to in order to offset German militarism after 1871. De Gaulle believed that Anglo-American entente was now marginalizing France internationally. France's exclusion from post-war conferences, UK-US nuclear cooperation, Roosevelt's animosity (coupled with a proposal to dismember France) and failure to neutralize Germany seemed to substantiate his view in the public's eyes.

After the Second World War, the Soviet Union was regarded by a large majority in France as the primary 'liberator' of Europe. The Americans, on the other hand, were feared and resented . . . [this attitude] continued to hold good on the left until the mid-1970s and the end of the Vietnam war.⁹⁴

Realizing that he could exploit left-wing anti-Americanism, de Gaulle argued that the Anglo-Saxon alliance had helped prepare 1940. As an alternative, the EEC would help France counter-balance the superpowers with a regional network. He rejected full EC integration, but developed an entente with Adenauer to serve as the basis from which an internationally active France could secure European stability. Anglo-American collusion was to be offset by Franco-German cooperation: 'if General de Gaulle had a fundamental idea, it was "no integration". There was a no less fundamental second idea: "no subordination to the United States".'⁹⁵ Nationalism appealed to those on the left who saw the EEC as anti-socialist and capitalist.

Left-wing concern centred, as it had since 1871, on Germany. The SFIO advocated integration, European defence and reconciliation with a democratic Germany. The anti-German and nationalist PCF spearheaded an opposition to the EEC that slowly declined under electoral pressure 'from the virulent denouncement of the United States' (and, by extension, West Germany's) hegemonic intentions of the 1950s, to the more subdued and more cooperative approach of the 1970s.⁹⁶ The PCF gradually realized that the EEC might counter US economic muscle and give France some middle-power leverage. The left understood that diplomatic and strategic options were limited and unilateral foreign initiatives even less tenable. Overall, de Gaulle used vanity and economic self-interest to set a foreign policy consensus. He recognized limits by making foreign policy a symbol of 'French autonomy and the accountability of authority within France, not a permanent threat of disruption'.⁹⁷ Above all, de Gaulle exploited a fear of decline. Before 1940, the French believed that their cultural mission was to 'civilize' colonies rather than exploit them for economic motives. The right viewed colonialism as a natural vocation for the oldest nation-state. The left identified France with 'civilization'. The

public believed that France's 'superior' culture was positive and humane until the assumption was swept away in the Algerian struggle. De Gaulle's vision thus promised to

increase France's standing in the world, ensure her a minimum of independence and freedom of manoeuvre in her international relationships, shelter her drive for social and economic progress at home, inculcate a sense of national identity and national interest in the body politic, reinforce and legitimate the new institutional structures of the 1958 Constitution.⁹⁸

As part of the vision, Franco-Soviet links were improved in the belief that overlapping ties, rather than increasing the possibilities of conflict, as the Americans believed, would in the long run reduce those possibilities by strengthening the sense of cooperation and political responsibility of individual nation-states with closer proximity to the needs and interests of their own peoples.⁹⁹

Socialists and conservatives knew that détente and an international 'good guy' image masked domestic authoritarianism.¹⁰⁰ Articulated 30 years ahead of its time, the Gaullist 'expectation that the bipolar international system would crumble, allowing NATO and the Warsaw Pact to disintegrate, was not borne out by events'.¹⁰¹ Foreign policy ambition was limited by cost. Gaullist defence policy was more successful, especially after left-wing opposition to the *force de frappe* diminished. While the PCF argued that nuclear weapons threatened humanity, class struggle and the USSR, the 'pacifist' SFIO thought they were unavoidable. Divergent views, poor military connections and an officer caste hostile to left-wing values hindered development of coherent policy alternatives.¹⁰²

Throughout the 1960s, the Fifth Republic was closely associated to de Gaulle. Only his retirement convincingly demonstrated that the new institutions would survive: 'under de Gaulle, the Fifth Republic was a face; under the presidency of Georges Pompidou, it was an institution . . . this proved that institutions that had been based on one man's prestige could function with ordinary personnel'.¹⁰³ De Gaulle's departure accompanied a relative decline in the socialist and nationalist themes prominent in his political language. In the early 1970s, economic expansion overrode other concerns. After Georges Pompidou's presidency, and despite energy shortages, debt and austerity, it was clear that French political culture had become 'Gaullist'. De Gaulle's institutional, defence and foreign policy accomplishments were uncontested. Political compromise replaced regionalism, protest and the disjuncture between society and state. The non-Marxist left formed new alliances to end the right-wing electoral

stranglehold. The move was anathema to the traditional extreme left, but Fifth Republic institutions had demonstrated to the public and most participants that they were flexible. Under Mitterrand, the moderate left proved that the regime had room for perceptive, organized and innovative parties of all stripes. The PS managed to galvanize public support over issues that de Gaulle had not solved. A good example is centralization, which gave the nation 'the impression of being subjected . . . to an authoritarian bureau-technocracy that takes no or little account of . . . grievances and that experiments in the dark'.¹⁰⁴ The PS thus decentralized and strengthened civil rights after 1981 while accepting and reinforcing de Gaulle's vision of France. Reserve over Soviet-US arms reductions and lengthy French-EC negotiations over Renault, for example, exhibited a Gaullist concern for national interest and showed the vitality of the ideology of greatness. Repeated reference to a national vocation in the 1989 bicentennial illustrated its importance in Mitterrand's policies. In fact, Mitterrand succeeded by embracing de Gaulle's legacy. Without de Gaulle,

France would not have received the capitulation of the Reich and Japan along with the Big Three. France would not have 'special rights' over Germany. It would not have one of five permanent seats, with the veto it entails, in the UN Security Council . . . It would not have a nuclear force. Its army would have probably been incorporated in a European defence community under American command, and it would have some time ago abdicated a large part of its sovereignty to a European confederation.¹⁰⁵

Political change between right and left was a source of paralysis and acrimony in the Third and Fourth Republics. It encouraged extreme-left and extreme-right dogmatism and violence. AD focused on this tradition rather than examining how attitudes changed under the Fifth Republic. In the 1980s, *alternance*¹⁰⁶ strengthened institutions, and public scepticism of authority declined.¹⁰⁷ Few electors trusted political parties in the 1950s: 'in August 1958, according to an IFOP poll, 95 per cent of the French said the Fourth Republic worked badly because "governments change too often", 88 per cent because "there are too many parties in Parliament"'.¹⁰⁸ In the 1980s, most voters identified with a party.¹⁰⁹ The number of parties fell from 14 to four between 1958 and 1982. The decline was encouraged by Fifth Republic institutions. Improved administration, an end to *immobilisme*, public confidence and increased participation also decreased political passivity and led to broad agreement over the functioning of institutions.¹¹⁰ After left and right successfully shared power in 1986-88, differentiation by traditional criteria was difficult:

France has experienced in turn Giscard's Colbertism, Mitterrand's socialism, Fabius's pragmatism, and Chirac's neo-liberalism. This gave birth to a contagious scepticism regarding doctrines and mythologies, totems and taboos. *Alternance* has killed off any residual gullibility about politics.¹¹¹

Jean-Marie Le Pen and André Lajoinie were the only presidential candidates who opposed *alternance* and consensus in 1988. Neither could hope to win in an electoral system in which success hinges on incorporation rather than exclusion:

Symbolizing socialism, the Republic and a form of humanism, François Mitterrand seeks to incorporate individuals into the political process rather than exclude them from it. Jacques Chirac does this as well, as the inheritor of a very pragmatic form of Gaullism – that is, like that of Georges Pompidou – and as prime minister; so does Raymond Barre by mixing a statesman-like style with a Gaullist temperament and personal references; finally, so does Michel Rocard by personifying a moderate, gradualist and open social democrat. In 1987, the main candidates' campaigns must appear more civil than military; no one can cut a figure without exorcising the spectre of an excluding society.¹¹²

In the 1980s, conciliation replaced aggressive rhetoric. Groups were still jealous, uncooperative, exclusive, and led by charismatic figures. However, the PCF experience demonstrates how inability to compromise threatened to push parties to the fringe. A multipartisan recognition of the international constraints on policy¹¹³ limited differences to style rather than substance. Beyond this, consensus developed over the need for growth, improved quality of life, and an independent foreign policy. The populist and Bonapartist RPR still focused on leadership, law and order and plebiscites, but was an 'electoral party' that 'openly accepts mass democracy, group solidarity, challenges liberal individualism, that is, accepts discipline in order to achieve an objective'.¹¹⁴ The Gaullist leftism of the PS stressed a strong presidency, weak parliament, coalitions and bloc unity. Its 'modernist' policies centred on state competition, global capital linkages, market economics and a civilizing vocation.¹¹⁵ National income and social hierarchy were altered by EC integration and global economic pressure. However, the educational issues raised in 1968 (myopic focus on literature, philosophy and history, neglect of technological-commercial programmes) and student unrest were unresolved. Riots crippled Jacques Chirac's presidential ambitions after his government tried to decrease university places and increase educational hierarchy.

Social rigidity was now diluted by economic concerns: 'the French agree on one point: economic growth is a necessary purpose. Almost nobody, except a minority of intellectuals and *gauchiste* students, challenges this goal.'¹¹⁶ The absence of calls for socialism in the late 1980s was striking:

Although there were two million unemployed as opposed to 800,000 at the advent of the *Front populaire*, class struggle remained less violent, and workers' patience was greater since they were at the same time less overwhelmed by toil and insecurity, and more conscious of the distance between the desirable and the possible.¹¹⁷

The PS advocated a guaranteed annual income and public housing. It only used nationalization to generate investment capital or preserve politically valuable jobs: 'a comparative analysis . . . of the French private and public sectors shows . . . that . . . national control of a large industrial and banking sector is indispensable to ensure harmonious development'.¹¹⁸

Despite the fact that it emerged in a political culture whose norms, values and institutions were widely accepted, AD understood that consensus has traditionally been episodic and tied to charisma. At the end of the Mitterrand era, the validity of its view is increasingly evident. The PS, for example, is now divided. Moreover, in spite of the massive PS losses in the legislative, regional and cantonal elections, the right-wing opposition is not an entirely coherent alternative. The 'traditional right' (RPR and UDF) could still be seriously challenged by the FN.¹¹⁹ Since 1976, the once omnipotent RPR has lost both its dominance over the system and its hold over the right-wing electorate. Adding to these setbacks, the 1986–88 Chirac administration was a serious failure. In the 1990s, racist incidents and anti-immigration sentiment encouraged *lepenisme*.¹²⁰ The FN protest movement has attracted right- and left-wing minorities that also oppose the consensus. As a result, the right has to fight to retain FN voters. The FN has taken over the protest role once occupied by *gauchistes*. Unlike the latter, the FN has successfully exploited themes such as fear of instability in eastern Europe.¹²¹ Another example of how consensus has affected the system can be seen in the PCF. In 1984, losses to the PS, discomfort with ministerial responsibility and alienated militants eased the PCF out of government. Its traditional electorate subsequently abstained or backed the FN¹²² and the party developed serious internal divisions. In October 1989, for example, former minister Charles Fiterman openly demanded new policies and led a *refondateur* dissent movement that exposed the isolation of PCF leaders. Despite this, Georges Marchais said that the Eastern bloc had an 'overall positive record', minimized its 'crisis of development', and claimed that 'the capitalist crisis is a systems crisis'.¹²³

Rank-and-file outrage over PCF ties to Nicolae Ceaușescu did little to change the party because:

no ideological debate whatsoever could emerge within it [the PCF] . . . the party no longer has an ideology. Perestroika provokes real fundamental debates in which 'Brezhnevians' openly confronted 'Gorbachevians' and vice versa within sectarian or tiny communist parties such as those in Portugal or West Germany; but perestroika entered the PCF as into a vacuum. The departure of militants at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s explains why this occurred. The replacement of seriously trained leaders who were sometimes very partial to the Soviet model with young members having an uncertain political background and who do not view the Soviet Union as a reference point greatly facilitates Mr Marchais' task.¹²⁴

The above examples indicate that party fragmentation will continue as the Mitterrand years end. However, the characteristics of the post-Mitterrand years are not yet clear. Le Pen and Jacques Delors are the only truly charismatic figures on the political scene.

In the 1980s, the PS 'modernist' vocation centred on US technology, marketing and management: 'a certain celebration of efficiency and economic modernization but nothing more'.¹²⁵ Mitterrand deftly adapted Gaullist grandeur to altered circumstances.¹²⁶ Foreign policy continued to focus on mediation between the USSR and US. The changes in Europe after 1989 brought the traditional concern for stability to the fore and made NATO ties even more valuable. An independent Third World policy, ties to former colonies, *la francophonie*, Franco-German entente and criticism of US foreign policy have less international impact. German reunification and EC integration may ensure stability, but further diminish French influence. The result has been a more 'Atlantic' defence posture.¹²⁷

A crucial difference from de Gaulle's presidency was the decline of heroic politics under Mitterrand and its replacement by a 'modernist' symbolic and policy consensus.¹²⁸ While the opposition regularly denied governments legitimacy in the Third and Fourth Republics, only the FN resorted to such terms. Mitterrand argued that the public has to choose between extreme-right traditionalism and a 'European' France. He realized that the FN 'embarrasses the right and, because of this, serves the left, which does not hesitate to use the juxtaposition to allege that there is "growing convergence" between the extreme right and right'.¹²⁹ By allowing the incorporation of most ideologies into institutional politics, the

regime decisively altered protest and violence. Large parties are still attacked by groups like the FN and ecologists at a local, regional, national and European level, but the protest 'function' has shifted. The extreme right has appropriated issues that previously galvanized the extreme left: immigration; foreign policy; domestic priorities; defence; and neo-colonialism. Protest moved off the street. Violence became inappropriate because institutions were seen as responsive. Both the FN and AD responded to a decline in ideological politics. AD was motivated by egalitarian communism, fear of an authoritarian mainstream left, and opposition to capitalist-directed socio-economic change. Like the *gauchistes*, AD believed that the parliamentary left served wealth, privilege, the US and multinational corporations. Like the FN, it opposed Americanization, the EC, NATO and a changing society. Unlike the FN, AD did not move its protest into the political mainstream, where the former began a rhetorically violent challenge to the establishment. AD remained on the fringe and tried to use utopian egalitarianism for revolutionary ends. It charged that the PS 'sell-out' justified its violence. By labelling compromise 'cooptation', AD recalled the traditional egalitarian communism and revolutionary radicalism that have long been present in national politics.¹³⁰ However, AD emerged in a political context in which

change occurred in an institutional framework on a regular basis, as the product of system mechanics, not the negation of the system. It was decided on two occasions by the electorate. It thus encourages institutionalization by allowing the regime to belong to everyone. The regime is detached from a conjunctural majority and a given idea of how it should work.¹³¹

The discussion below demonstrates that AD's concerns were contradictory. They were anachronistic, but anticipated many mainstream issues. Overall, AD's effort to draw on the extreme-left traditions set in 1789 and the Third, Fourth and Fifth republics gave its action an anachronistic quality. Unlike previous revolutionary factions, AD's references to tradition revealed its social and political isolation.

NOTES

1. Andrew C. Janos, 'Authority and Violence: The Political Framework of Internal War', in Harry Eckstein (ed.), *Internal War* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 139.
2. Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order 1940-1944* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).
3. Stanley Hoffmann, 'Paradoxes of the French Political Community', in *In Search of France* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 7.

4. 'Repose fondamentalement sur l'opposition entre les partisans d'une société hiérarchiste et les tenants d'une société égalitaire... un axe permanent de la vie politique française, même si les critères en sont évolutifs et l'équilibre variable'. Serge Sur, *La vie politique en France sous la V^e République* (Paris: Editions Montchrestien, 1982), p. 154.
5. 'De 1789 à 1914, aucun gouvernement n'est acceptable par tous les citoyens. Deux légitimités irréductibles s'opposent. Une grande partie du pays demeure fidèle au principe monarchique de l'Ancien Régime: elle veut un roi qui renoue avec la dynastie chassée du trône en 1792. Une autre partie s'enflamme pour le nouveau principe de la souveraineté nationale: elle réclame un pouvoir appuyé sur le suffrage universel et les libertés publiques. On se massacre pour les régimes politiques autant que pour les intérêts de classe.' Maurice Duverger, *La Cinquième République* (Paris: PUF, 1970), p. 27.
6. 'Les deux camps ne s'opposaient pas seulement sur la gestion et le développement de la nation, mais sur ses valeurs fondamentales. Entre les Enragés et les Ultras, il n'y avait rien de commun, sinon la volonté de se liquider mutuellement.' Ibid., p. 20.
7. For a discussion on the republican use of state mechanisms against anti-republican foes, see Bruce Fulton, 'The Boulanger Affair Revisited: Preservation of the Third Republic, 1889', in *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Fall 1991), pp. 310-29.
8. Michel Crozier, *The Stalled Society* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), p. 95.
9. For varieties of French terrorism, see Appendix 2.1.
10. Hoffmann, 'Heroic Leadership', in Louis J. Edinger (ed.), *Political Leadership in Industrialized Societies* (New York: Wiley, 1967), p. 118.
11. 'The Public Safety Committee'.
12. R.R. Palmer, *Twelve Who Ruled, The Year of the Terror in the French Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 311.
13. 'Declaration of the Rights of Man'.
14. Although Serge July (*Les Années Mitterrand* (Paris: Grasset, 1986)) argued that the pattern has been superseded, the 1989 *affaire des foulards* (scarf scandal) demonstrated that education is still divisive. Parts of the left (usually, but not always, furthest 'left') viewed toleration of religion in secular schools as a threat to 'republican' education. Parts of the right (usually, but not always, furthest 'right') argued that tolerance would open traditional national culture to an Islamic threat. Both concurred over the socio-cultural status quo and tried to avoid the social consequences of modern transport, communications and economics: international immigration and cultural *brassage* (mixing).
15. 'La France est peut-être le seul pays d'Europe qui n'ait jamais vraiment admis la grande coupure, le grand renversement intellectuel, scientifique et politique effectué dans l'Ecosse des Lumières, vers la fin du XVIII^e siècle, qui s'est voulu - et qui a été réellement - l'acte de naissance de la modernité. Là... apparaissent à la fois la science économique, la philosophie utilitaire et la théorie politique du libéralisme.' Claude Nicolet, *L'idée républicaine en France* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1982), p. 479.
16. Jacques Chapsal and Alain Lancelot, *La vie politique en France depuis 1940* (Paris: PUF, 1979), p. 13.
17. Literally: 'Jacobinism' (named after the revolutionary party that created the First Republic), 'Bonapartism' (a form of charismatic, upwardly mobile monarchical authoritarianism), 'Ultra-royalism' (supporters of the old monarchy), 'Orleanism' (advocates of a British-style constitutional monarchy), and 'Blanquism' (revolutionary putschism).
18. 'The people', the term first used by the revolutionaries to refer to the mass of the French citizens.
19. Hoffmann, 'Heroic', p. 123.
20. Hoffmann, 'Paradoxes', p. 13.
21. 'L'histoire du XIX^e siècle français tout entier peut être considérée comme l'histoire d'une lutte entre la Révolution et la Restauration, à travers des épisodes qui seraient 1815, 1830, 1848, 1851, 1870, la Commune, le 16 mai 1877. Seule la victoire des républicains sur les monarchistes, dans les débuts de la Troisième République, signe définitivement la victoire de la Révolution dans les profondeurs du pays.' François Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), pp. 17-18.
22. Hoffmann, 'The Ruled: Protest as a National Way of Life', in *Decline or Renewal? France*

- since the 1930s (New York: Viking Press, 1974), p.121.
23. 'L'important, pour Blanqui, est de prendre le pouvoir, et d'imposer la révolution à la France entière, par la dictature parisienne. A cet effet, il ne compte nullement sur la classe ouvrière, qu'il juge pas mûre, mais sur une équipe de révolutionnaires professionnels, voués corps et âme à la Cause; les classes laborieuses devenant ensuite le soutien de cette dictature révolutionnaire, qui devait appliquer les principes du communisme et les répandre au-delà des frontières.' Jean-Pierre Azéma and Michel Winock, *La troisième République* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1976), p.35.
 24. 'Au XIX^e, chaque nouveau régime répudie fondamentalement le précédent, s'installe sur ses débris et tire sa légitimité de son rejet – même si, ce faisant, il renoue avec un régime antérieur, par un jeu de saute-mouton: la Restauration avec l'Ancien Régime, la II^e République avec la Convention, Napoléon III avec l'Empire, la III^e avec la Révolution française.' Sur, p.18.
 25. 'En effet le parti de la Révolution française... Est radical qui professe à l'égard de la Révolution française un loyalisme analogue à celui des royalistes pour leur roi'. Albert Thibaudet, *Les idées politiques en France* (Paris: Librairie Stock, 1932), p.121.
 26. 'La France a pour truchement et pour signe, des idées, tandis qu'avec le roi elle avait pour truchement et pour signe des personnes, personnes physiques et personnes morales... La nation française est une nation missionnaire, chargée d'un message.' Ibid., p.127.
 27. 'On reconnaît le vrai Jacobin à ce que, de temps en temps, il se dit: "Il n'y a décidément qu'un pur, c'est moi".' Ibid., p.123.
 28. Crane Brinton, *A Decade of Revolution 1789–1799* (New York: Harper & Row, 1934), p.283.
 29. 'Les sociétés de pensée s'opposent aux sociétés naturelles et aux sociétés d'intérêt, en ce que les hommes s'y réunissent pour discuter, critiquer, remuer des idées, agir par les idées.' Thibaudet, p.137.
 30. 'Le bonheur... une idée neuve en Europe'. Ibid., p.183.
 31. 'Minimum de bonheur pour tous, la possibilité pour tous de connaître les biens propres à l'existence humaine'. Ibid., p.180.
 32. 'L'idéal socialiste n'est jamais épuisé par la réalisation d'un but particulier, alors que l'idéal radical a subi, du fait de la séparation, une crise qui dure encore: par plus que l'idéal chrétien n'est épuisé par une réussite particulière, soit par la vie d'un saint... Tandis que le radicalisme cherche à éliminer plus ou moins pacifiquement la religion, le socialisme aspire à la remplacer.' Ibid.
 33. Hoffmann, 'Paradoxes', p.13.
 34. Chapsal and Lancelot, p.14. Even how to commemorate 14 July 1789 opened rifts in July 1989. Opposition leaders boycotted the official Jean-Paul Goude-produced parade on the Champs Elysées. The extreme-right protested by commemorating the Vendée massacres and holding a mass for Louis XVI.
 35. 'Upper bourgeoisie'.
 36. Hoffman, 'The Ruled', p.123.
 37. Ibid.
 38. 'Paralysis'. Once again, the term is a classic within French political history and discourse. All further references to 'immobility' in French political history shall be made in the original French.
 39. Hoffmann, 'Heroic', p.123.
 40. Under the Third Republic, the schoolmaster and local *préfet* embodied republican legitimacy, in opposition to a counter-revolutionary church, aristocratic remnants and wealthy bourgeoisie. Left-wing unions typically opposed both groups and were excluded from power.
 41. Hoffmann, 'The Ruled', p.131.
 42. 'La tradition républicaine, même et surtout lorsqu'elle veut intégrer la modernité, refuse en fait, plus ou moins consciemment, la coupure entièrement admise par les Anglo-Saxons. Nous l'avons vu amplement en ce qui concerne les formes politiques: aux simples "garantis" des droits individuels s'est toujours superposé le principe du gouvernement du peuple par lui-même.' Nicolet, p.480.
 43. Hoffmann, 'Paradoxes', p.8.
 44. Crozier, p.95.
 45. Hoffmann, 'Paradoxes', p.19.
 46. Chapsal and Lancelot, p.141.
 47. 'Three-party rule'.
 48. Sur, p.18.

49. For example, the classically oriented university curriculum provided no preparation for commercial and technical jobs.
50. 'Strike force'. This is the name of the French nuclear force.
51. Quermonne, p.33.
52. Ibid., p.33.
53. Monica Charlot, 'L'émergence du Front national', in *Revue française de science politique*, Vol.36, No.1 (Feb. 1986), p.30.
54. 'L'une est la guerre assortie de la répression: à l'extérieur, elle les conduit à Suez tandis qu'à l'intérieur elle les amène à tolérer la torture. L'autre réponse est la recherche d'une solution diplomatique qu'on ose s'avouer et que des couloirs de l'O.N.U. aux "bons offices" des États-Unis, en passant par Rabat et Tunis, apparaît dépourvu d'objectif clairement défini.' Ibid., p.37.
55. 'Petainism'. The term is drawn from the name of the Vichy leader, Pétain.
56. Hoffmann, 'Paradoxes', p.19.
57. 'Les deux raisons d'être fondamentales de la V^e République étaient assurément de régler le problème algérien et de refaire l'État.' Chapsal and Lancelot, p.489.
58. Philip G. Cerny, 'Gaullism, Advanced Capitalism and the Fifth Republic', in D.J. Bell (ed.), *Contemporary French Political Parties* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1982), p.28.
59. 'Constitutional Council'.
60. 'Cette constitution a fait, pendant des années, l'objet de gloses des "exégètes" qui ne pouvaient la réduire ni au régime parlementaire ni au régime présidentiel.' Jacques Chapsal, *La Vie politique sous la V^e République* (Paris: PUF, 1981), p.676.
61. Suzanne Berger, 'French Politics at a Turning Point?', in *French Politics and Society*, Issue 15 (Nov. 1986), p.4.
62. 'Intermédiaire entre la monarchie limitée et le régime parlementaire classique, dont la Charte de 1830 et Louis-Philippe d'Orléans fournissent un très bon exemple.' Duverger, p.14.
63. Hoffmann, 'The Constitution and the Elections of 1986', in *French Politics and Society* (13 March 1986), p.27.
64. The PCF vote fell from 28 per cent in 1946 to 26 per cent in 1951 and 1956. In 1958 the PCF received 19.2 per cent of the vote. Its share rose to 21.7 per cent in 1962 and 22.5 per cent in 1967.
65. The SFIO received 23 per cent of the vote in 1945. This fell to 15.7 per cent in 1958 and 12.6 per cent in 1962. The Radical vote fell to 11 per cent in 1945, 8.3 per cent in 1958, 7.8 per cent in 1962.
66. 'Anti-establishment'.
67. See Chapsal, *La Vie politique*.
68. Cerny, 'Cleavage, Aggregation, and Change in French Politics', in *The British Journal of Political Science* (2, 4 Oct. 1972), p.450.
69. For a discussion of May 1968 and *gauchisme*, see Ch.3.
70. 'Ils sont multiples, protéiformes, prêts à s'opposer les uns aux autres, chacun incarnant la bonne révolution vis-à-vis de laquelle les autres sont des traîtres.' Chapsal, p.460.
71. Duverger, *République des citoyens*, p.13.
72. The giscardiste Parti républicain (PR), Centre des Démocrates sociaux (CDS), Parti radical, the political clubs *Réalités* and *Perspectives* and the Mouvement démocrate socialiste.
73. Cerny, 'Gaullism, Advanced Capitalism and the Fifth Republic', p.28.
74. See Cerny, *The Politics of Grandeur: Ideological Aspects of de Gaulle's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
75. 'Flottant sur un peuple profondément divisé, au milieu d'un univers terriblement dangereux, se montrait hors d'état d'assurer la conduite des affaires.' De Gaulle's 13 June 1958 radio address, cited in François Borella, *Les partis politiques dans la France d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1981), p.22.
76. 'La puissance et la stabilité du gouvernement reposent sur l'existence au parlement d'une majorité disciplinée, qui demeure en place jusqu'à l'expiration du mandat des députés. Détenant l'Exécutif et contrôlant le Législatif, elle reçoit son pouvoir des électeurs et le remet entre leurs mains au scrutin suivant. Disposant des moyens d'agir, elle est jugée à des résultats dont elle ne peut éluder la responsabilité.' Duverger, p.19.
77. See H. Portelli, 'La présidentialisation des partis français', in *Pouvoirs*, 14 (1980), pp.97–106.

78. 'Séparation des pouvoirs avec un chef d'État fort, qui soit un arbitre' and a 'régime parlementaire, que l'on veut, enfin, faire fonctionner correctement'. Chapsal and Lancelot, p.378.
79. 'L'originalité de la V^e République est donc également d'avoir ébauché la structuration d'une opposition dont on a pu penser, à la veille de certaines échéances, qu'elle occuperait le pouvoir.' Quermonne, p.433.
80. 'Une forme nouvelle du "gouvernement mixte", celui que d'Aristote à Montesquieu, la philosophie politique a longtemps appelé de ses vœux'. Quermonne, p.582.
81. 'Le gouvernement ne procède pas du Parlement.' Ibid., p.7.
82. 'Le jeu des formations parlementaires n'est pas, en soi, si différent de ce qu'il était sous des régimes précédents; mais ce n'est plus en lui que se trouve la source du pouvoir et cette différence, voulue et imposée dans tous les détails par la constitution de 1958, est absolument capitale.' Chapsal, p.681.
83. Henry W. Ehrmann, *Politics in France* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1983), p.262.
84. Ibid., p.679.
85. 'Conseil Constitutionnel qui veillera à faire respecter par le législateur les principes essentiels.' Quermonne, p.4.
86. 'La loi va perdre son caractère sacré pour constituer une catégorie d'actes juridiques.' Ibid., p.51.
87. 'Les socialistes sont en principe dans l'opposition, mais la politique algérienne du Général les rallie assez souvent'. Chapsal, p.211.
88. 'Elle se considère toujours comme l'espérance. Or, l'espérance a toujours à être un peu messianique.' Hoffmann, 'Transformations et contradictions de la V^e République', in Georges Santoni (ed.), *Société et culture de la France contemporaine* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), p.284.
89. Hoffmann, 'The Ruled', pp.131–41.
90. 'Des forces de proposition, de soutien ou de contestation, des relais électoraux plus que le centre du pouvoir. Le contraste avec les républiques antérieures, dont l'histoire se confond avec celle des doctrines, des alliances, des ruptures et des échecs des partis, est profond.' Sur, p.123.
91. Cerny, 'Cleavage', p.451.
92. 'L'occasion de la cristallisation de toutes les oppositions au gaullisme. D'abord, les oppositions à l'armement atomique: à la fois gauche de scrupules et la droite de finances. La gauche de scrupules, parce que l'armement atomique, et la désintégration atomique, ce ne sont pas de perspectives très agréables pour l'humanité, et la droite de finances parce que cela coûte extrêmement cher. C'est également l'opposition à la politique non intégrationniste du général: c'est donc l'opposition de tous ceux qui sont des "Européens". Et c'est enfin, d'une manière plus générale, l'opposition à la politique élyséenne de tous les antigauillistes.' Chapsal and Lancelot, p.500.
93. The followers of Robert Poujade, an extreme-right politician during the 1950s.
94. Jolyon Howorth, *France: The Politics of Peace* (London: Merlin Press, 1984), p.13.
95. 'S'il y a une idée fondamentale du général de Gaulle: "pas d'intégration", il y a seconde idée, non moins fondamentale: pas de subordination aux États-Unis'. Chapsal and Lancelot, p.498.
96. Joy Bound and Kevin Featherstone, 'The French Left and the European Community', in Bell, *Contemporary French Political Parties*, p.176.
97. Cerny, *The Politics of Grandeur*, p.270.
98. Ibid., p.129.
99. Cerny, 'Gaullism, Nuclear Weapons and the State', in Jolyon Howorth and Patricia Chilton (eds), *Defence and Dissent in Contemporary France* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p.66.
100. Hoffmann, 'Heroic', p.143.
101. Neville Waites, 'Defence Policy: The Historical Context', in Jolyon Howorth and Patricia Chilton (eds), *Defence and Dissent in Contemporary France*, p.40.
102. See Cerny, 'Gaullism, Nuclear Weapons and the State', p.67.
103. 'La V^e République, c'était, avec de Gaulle, un visage; sous la présidence de Georges Pompidou, c'est une institution... Il apporte la preuve que les institutions qui reposaient jusque-là sur le prestige d'un homme pouvaient désormais fonctionner avec un personnel ordinaire.' Chapsal, p.677.
104. Hoffmann, 'The Ruled', p.139.
105. 'Sans lui, la France n'aurait pas reçu en compagnie des trois Grands la capitulation du Reich et du Japon. Elle ne conserverait pas avec eux des "droits réservés" sur l'Allemagne. Elle ne disposerait pas de l'un des cinq sièges permanents, avec le droit de veto qu'il confère, au Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies... Elle n'aurait pas de dissuasion nucléaire. Son armée aurait probablement été incorporée

- dans une communauté européenne de défense sous commandement américain, et elle aurait abdiqué depuis belle lurette une grande partie de sa souveraineté aux mains d'une confédération européenne.' 'De Gaulle au cent', by André Fontaine in *Le Monde* (24 May 1990), p.2.
106. 'Alternation' or 'rotation'. In France, the term refers to transfer of power from a right-wing to a left-wing administration or vice versa. All further references to *alternance* shall be made in French.
107. The trend changed in 1991, suggesting that distrust is always latent and that the Mitterrand consensus was ending. By 1992, serious discontent with the PS administration, and clear signs that the Mitterrand consensus was ending in a way similar to its predecessors, became patent.
108. 'En août 1958, selon un sondage IFOP, 95% des Français expliquent le mauvais fonctionnement de la Quatrième République parce que "les gouvernements changeaient trop souvent", 88% parce qu'"il y avait trop de partis au Parlement".' Jean Charlot, 'La transformation de l'image des partis politiques français', in *Revue française de science politique*, Vol.30, No.1 (Feb. 1986), p.7.
109. About 85 per cent according to a 1985 SOFRES-Cevipof poll. Refusal to identify with a political party fell from 50 per cent in 1958 to 15 per cent in 1985.
110. See Charlot, 'La transformation'.
111. 'La France a expérimenté tour à tour le colbertisme giscardien, le socialisme mitterrandien, le pragmatisme fabiusien, le néo-libéralisme chiraquien. Il en naît un scepticisme contagieux vis-à-vis des doctrines et des mythologies, des totems et des tabous. L'alternance, elle, a tué net la crédulité résiduelle à l'égard des programmes.' Alain Duhamel, 'Une élection charismatique: Campagne présidentielle sans programmes', in *Le Monde* (22–23 March 1987).
112. 'François Mitterrand le fait, qui symbolise à la fois le socialisme, la République, et une forme d'humanisme. Jacques Chirac aussi, qui apparaît en héritier d'un gaullisme très pragmatique – c'est-à-dire en pompidolien – et en premier ministre; Raymond Barre aussi, qui mêle un style d'homme d'État à un tempérament gaullien et des références personnalistes; Michel Rocard, enfin, qui personnifie une social-démocratie modérée, gradualiste et ouverte. En 1987, la campagne des grands candidats doit apparaître plus civile que militaire; nul ne saurait faire figure sans exorciser le spectre d'une société d'exclusion.' Ibid.
113. Vincent Wright, 'The Change in France', in V. Wright (ed.), *Continuity and Change in France* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp.73–4 and 78–9.
114. 'Parti d'électeurs', that 'admet pleinement la démocratie de masse, la solidarité de groupe, récuse l'individualisme libéral, c'est-à-dire admet la discipline en vue de l'objectif'. Jean Charlot, *L'UNR, étude du pouvoir au sein d'un parti politique* (Paris: A. Colin, Cahiers FNSP, 1967).
115. Such as the project du Grand Louvre, the Opéra de la Bastille, la Villette, media decentralization and the new 'TGB' ('très grande bibliothèque', nickname for the new national library at Tolbiac).
116. Hoffmann, 'The State: For What Society?', in *Decline or Renewal? France since the 1930's* (New York: Viking Press, 1974), p.469.
117. 'Bien qu'il y eût alors deux millions de chômeurs contre huit cent mille à l'avènement du Front populaire, la lutte des classes est restée moins violente, et plus grande la patience des travailleurs, à la fois moins accablés par le labeur et l'insécurité, et plus conscients de la distance entre le souhaitable et le possible.' Duverger, p.34.
118. 'L'analyse comparée... du secteur public et du secteur privé en France, montrent... que... le contrôle par la nation d'un vaste secteur industriel et bancaire est indispensable pour assurer un développement harmonieux.' Duverger, *La République des citoyens* (Paris: Éditions Ramsay, 1982), p.174.
119. After losing the 1988 presidential elections, RPR-UDF *renovateurs* demanded policy renewal and new leadership. Chirac was challenged by Lyon RPR mayor Michel Noir, whose relative progressiveness was popular. Noir openly stated that Peugeot CEO Jacques Calvet's attitudes to a strike, for example, were evidence of outdated management practices. Chirac allied with Giscard to battle with the FN.
120. 'Lepenisme' refers to an extreme-right movement led by Jean-Marie Le Pen that grew dramatically during the 1980s. All further references to this movement will use the French term.
121. At the very moment that Prague demonstrators demanded political pluralism and the

resignation of authorities in November 1989, a *reconstructeur* (group led by Marcel Rigout, Claude Poperen and Félix Damette) document said that Stalinism had survived PCF reforms: 'cela se traduit par un refus de constater les évidences et par de laborieuses contorsions ... Une régression intellectuelle et politique sans précédent nous a fait revenir trente ans en arrière.' *Le Monde* (26–27 Nov. 1989).

122. Pierre Martin, 'Le rapport de forces droite/gauche en 1986', in *Revue française de sciences politiques*, Vol.36, No.5 (Oct. 1986).
123. 'Bilan globalement positif' and minimized its 'crise de développement', claiming 'la crise du capitalisme, elle, est une crise du système'. *Le Monde* (14 Nov. 1989).
124. 'Aucun débat idéologique n'a pu se développer en son sein ... le parti lui-même n'a plus d'idéologie. La perestroïka provoque dans des partis communistes sectaires ou groupusculaires, comme les PC portugais ou ouest-allemand, de vrais débats de fond, où les "brejnéviens" affrontent ouvertement les "gorbatchéviens", et vice versa; mais elle entre dans le PCF comme dans un ventre mou. L'hémorragie militante de la fin des années 70 et du début des années 80 n'est pas étrangère à cette situation. Le remplacement de cadres sérieusement formés et parfois très attachés au modèle soviétique par de jeunes adhérents à la culture politique incertaine et ne considérant pas l'Union soviétique comme une référence facilite grandement la tâche de M. Marchais.' 'M. Marchais, le dernier des Mohicans', *Le Monde* (14 Nov. 1989).
125. 'Une certaine célébration de l'efficacité et de la modernisation économique mais rien de plus.' Hoffmann, 'Transformations', p.269.
126. Universalism and a sense of *grandeur* (greatness) were very clear in the 1989 bicentennial. The 14 July 1989 edition of *Le Monde* declared: 'Les cérémonies du Bicentenaire de la Révolution et le sommet des sept pays industrialisés: M. Mitterrand veut exalter le "message" de la France.' Mitterrand hailed the coincidence of the bicentennial and a Western summit that 'avait le mérite majeur de rassembler chez nous, autour de notre Révolution, de notre Déclaration des droits de l'homme, autour de la France, une trentaine de chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement, qui tous avaient à coeur d'être là ces jours-là'. *Le Monde* (14 July 1989, p.34). He tried to transform coincidence into a North–South summit by inviting Third World world leaders. The extreme left and extreme right grumbled over expenses, but the public and mainstream opposition supported Mitterrand. In fact, the public saw the summit and celebrations as evidence of France's international political-moral leadership.
127. This stance was, in any event, already evident: 'French defence policy from 1981 made them the staunchest (non-integrated) member of the Atlantic alliance. This commitment on the part of the French government of the left enabled the NATO council to hold its annual meeting in Paris in June 1983 for the first time since the rupture of 1966.' Waites, pp.41–2.
128. Jacques Capdevielle and René Mouriaux, *Mai 68: L'entre-deux de la modernité, Histoire de trente ans* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1988), p.15.
129. 'Gêne la droite et, de ce fait, sert la gauche qui ne manque d'ailleurs pas de s'en servir en alléguant une "convergence croissante" entre l'extrême droite et la droite.' Charlot, p.44.
130. René Rémond, *Les droites en France* (Paris: Aubier, 1982), p.31.
131. 'Changement a été pleinement réalisé dans le cadre institutionnel, il résulte d'une échéance régulière, il est le produit des mécanismes du système et non sa négation, il a été décidé, et décidé par deux fois par le corps électoral. Il favorise ainsi l'institutionnalisation du régime. Celui-ci appartient désormais à tous. Il est détaché d'une majorité conjoncturelle, d'une conception donnée de son fonctionnement.' Sur, p.571.

3 The Elusive Formula: *Gauchisme*, May 1968 and *Action directe*

AD drew its belief that socialism could be achieved through an armed struggle under the leadership of a revolutionary vanguard from *gauchisme* and the 'near revolution' of May 1968. The latter event in particular spawned an anarchist-tainted Maoism that inspired AD. *Gauchisme* was a variety of non-conformist extra-parliamentary extreme leftism that appeared in France in the 1960s and 1970s. Its proponents were distinguished by their focus on what were then new social issues, opposition to traditional forms of organization and hierarchy (especially the established socialist and communist movements and the example of the USSR), a focus on youth as a social vanguard, and advocacy of direct action techniques, including violence. *Gauchisme* was the dominant French extreme-left protest movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Its heterogeneity was a reaction to the mainstream left's homogeneity, sectarianism and ineffectiveness. *Gauchiste* ideological and organizational ecumenicism expressed an effort to rearticulate left-wing principles in new social conditions.

The *gauchiste* movement did not have a uniform or straightforward impact on the French left, in part because the ideological and organizational precedents for *gauchisme* had long existed on the extreme left. The Trotskyists in the *Organisation communiste internationaliste* (OCI – Internationalist Communist Organization), for example, had previously espoused nonconformity. Although it also took on the burden of Trotskyist legitimacy and orthodoxy, the OCI opposed Soviet communism and the PCF before *gauchisme* appeared. Other Trotskyists in *Voix ouvrière* (VO – Workers' Voice) also severely criticized Soviet socialism but were less harsh on the PCF. VO¹ was directly influenced by Bolshevism, clandestine activity and the East Europeans who founded it in 1938. They considered French Trotskyism social democratic and faction-ridden. VO agitated in Renault plant unions after the war. Another group of nonconformists was

the Trotskyist *Ligue communiste révolutionnaire* (LCR – Revolutionary Communist League), created when Pierre Frank gathered post-war PCF dissidents to prepare for a new conflagration. The group saw some advantages in the Soviet system and believed that the PCF had some independence. Together, these Trotskyist groups perpetuated long-standing extreme-left traditions of nonconformity. They were one foundation of *gauchisme* in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

In the 1950s, other varieties of left-wing dissent fed on widespread dissatisfaction with the parliamentary left. The SFIO government adopted policies for industrial restructuring, economic modernization and retention of colonies by military force. A scattering of organizations and individuals objected that this accommodated capitalism and contradicted left-wing principles. The Algerian conflict then blurred traditional ideological divisions between the SFIO and right-wing parties because the war was not

a 'pure' left-right confrontation. Many prestigious representatives of the secular and republican left, who served beyond measure in the *Front populaire* – Spain, the resistance, anti-Stalinism – fully took up the cause of maintaining Algeria in the French Republic from the first day for Jacobin, patriotic and universalist motives.²

The Algerian War devastated the SFIO and the left as a whole. The SFIO was pushed into opposition after de Gaulle's *coup d'état* and never regained credibility. Without credible anti-Gaullist rivals from 1958 to 1965, the extreme left began to articulate the growing frustration and rebelliousness of youth. A mass of young people believed that the mainstream left-wing parties did not represent their needs and aspirations. Despite his relative success in the 1965 presidential campaign,³ young left-wingers were suspicious of Mitterrand because he had been an SFIO interior minister during the Algerian War. The mainstream left moreover lacked the charisma and policies needed to attract supporters of radical political and social change. Its momentum was again lost after 1965 since 'no cogent issue appeared to cement more firmly the coalition of left-wing parties'.⁴ However, a number of issues were available. Gaullism brought economic growth and political stability, but not social and cultural flexibility. The young were crowded into poor education facilities and faced dismal employment prospects upon graduation. Their discontent lent itself to ideologically radical alternatives.

Not only the SFIO facilitated the rise of *gauchisme*. The PCF was the largest left-wing party in the 1950s and 1960s. It inadvertently encouraged non-conformist youth organizations in the early Fifth Republic by refusing to discuss Stalinism and international communist pluralism, issues that

interested young leftists. The PCF wanted to preserve hierarchy and party unity: 'in fact, from 1961 until the beginning of the 1970s, the French communist party held "Stalinism" in check'.⁵ Party leaders were uncomfortable with Khrushchev's repudiation of Stalin, a leader they had loyally followed. When Khrushchev demanded a denunciation, they were confused and avoided debate as much as possible; 'it was necessary to condemn the unworthy father without renouncing either his blood or his breed'.⁶ The 1962 Sino-Soviet split exacerbated party tensions and encouraged what became French Maoism. Chinese fidelity to Stalin and charges that de-Stalinization was elitist attracted the support of some party members. The PCF was caught between a double commitment to Stalin and the CPSU. Many members saw Stalin as a symbol of the wartime resistance movement and Soviet anti-Nazi struggle in spite of his errors. They thought that Chinese Maoism was more faithful to communist tradition since it in some ways resembled the wartime resistance movement: it was republican, condemned party politics, distrusted parliamentary democracy, and viewed capitalism as a betrayal. Maoists tried to exploit a faith in revolution, national self-sufficiency and revolutionary unity that had been strong in the left-wing resistance movement.⁷ They argued that capitalism abandoned French communists during the war in the same way that it threw Stalin to the Nazis. Franco-Chinese friendship associations spread these views in the PCF and went on to form the *Parti communiste marxiste-léniniste de France* (PCMLF – Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of France) after 1964.

Together, the SFIO and PCF pushed groups of restive politicized youth into organizations like the *Union nationale des étudiants français* (UNEF – National Union of French University Students). The UNEF had marshalled a dynamic student opposition movement to the Algerian War and gave coherency to a disparate group of 'communist militia irregulars, unruly children of a Church in permanent crisis, radicalized Protestants, Jews who were living the impossible mourning of the Shoah, but had no words to express it'.⁸ The anti-war movement structured criticism of the establishment left and provided organizational experience. The UNEF helped students organize a legitimate pressure group, 'a political actor capable of intervening on the basis of a methodical analysis of "each lived reality of all citizens"'.⁹ The UNEF was 'the first organization that dared defy de Gaulle after the shock of 1958'.¹⁰ Unions and the media (especially newspapers) gave it support. The UNEF's influence declined after the war was settled in 1962. However, its articulation of a national moral conscience set a precedent for student activism. The once orthodox and subservient *Union des étudiants communistes* (UEC – Union of Communist University Students) tried to fill the void after the UNEF

declined. The former experienced 'a mass break with French-style Stalinism'¹¹ and began to debate Stalinism and the Sino-Soviet split:

We started to find the Thorez apparatchiks singularly conformist and boring. Their lethargic legalism, grey discipline, total absence of imagination, absolute reverence toward the Soviets, contempt for internal democracy, refusal to debate issues that agitated the communist movement from Cuba to Beijing to Rome, concrete intellectual conformism, absolute closure to modern life, and aggressively imposed petit-bourgeois morality all rapidly detached youth from the line and diverted them dangerously toward other ideological poles. Basically, the PCF seemed to participate in its own manner in the old authoritarian and archaic French society.¹²

Trotskyists, 'Italians' and Maoists flocked to the UEC between 1963 and 1965. When they were eventually expelled, the other PCF factions and remaining (pro-Chinese) Stalinists were discouraged and outraged. The heterogeneous dissident movement multiplied into a number of *groupuscules*.¹³ As a result, the extreme left could be said,

in the second half of the 1960s, to be composed of revolutionary 'ideological families'. Thus, in addition to the PSU, which consistently refused to impose upon its members ideological conformity and remained . . . a roof organization encompassing almost all the existing ideological trends of the left, there existed the Trotskyist family, the 'Marxist-Leninist' family [the pro-Chinese or Maoist] and other groups and intellectual circles of less defined character.¹⁴

Progressive PCF youth could shop between Trotskyism, Maoism, Castroism, the PCI and Third World revolution. These left and right 'deviations' gave *gauchisme* both libertarian and totalitarian tendencies.

Dissidence also grew in SFIO and left-wing Catholic youth organizations. Independent socialist and SFIO-PCF dissidents who were fed up with left-wing malaise and the Algerian War founded the PSU in 1960. Many SFIO members had opposed the Algerian war. Others were *mendésistes*, followers of former Prime Minister Mendès-France. Another group came from the independent left *Tribune du communisme* (Forum of Communism) or the Catholic left. Maoists, Trotskyists and anarchists joined these organizations as well. PSU disclosures about torture, disappearances and other human rights violations during the war rocked the left. By criticizing the war, post-capitalist society and bureaucratic centralization, the PSU attained considerable intellectual clout. It later filtered ideas between the left-wing parties and *gauchistes*. It adopted

'revolutionary' ideals that became typical left-wing themes during the 1960s and 1970s.

The UNEF, UEC and PSU provided the ideological and organizational foundations for *gauchisme*. They also continued national political traditions by posing as enlightened vanguards dedicated to educating and intellectually improving the common people. Their 'youth' focus expressed the generational-ideological shift that occurred in the 1960s.¹⁵ The *groupuscules* rejected electoralism:

Readers of Althusser, Gramsci or Sartre, progressive Christians or anarchists, they were – more or less – tortured by a *complex of illegitimacy*, the fatality of being bastards: only the messianic class, the working class, the anti-capitalist class by origin and destination, could – one day – despite the 'revisionist' lullaby, despite the shackles of 'bureaucrats', receive and copy their rebellion.¹⁶

The *gauchistes* advocated direct, unfettered participation and declared that 'universal suffrage is a trick by bourgeois power'.¹⁷ Despite profound internal differences, they were distinct by virtue of 'on the one hand, the revolutionary character of their objectives, which were as much cultural as political, and, on the other hand, by their style of action'.¹⁸ Given their origins, *gauchistes* were particularly opposed to PCF accommodation with the Fifth Republic regime. They turned to controversial issues that the mainstream left ignored, such as the Vietnam War, the university and the status of the capitalist worker. Because they believed that direct action best responded to institutional politics, *gauchistes* lacked the unified organization and programmes that would have provided clear alternatives.¹⁹ Despite much agitation, organization and discussion, *gauchisme* was entirely marginal until May 1968.

May 1968

The post-war period of social, political and cultural change culminated in May 1968. National and international events in 1967 and 1968 fuelled a belief in revolutionary direct action.²⁰ Domestically, a series of nation-wide wild-cat strikes increased tension. Student protests in Nanterre then ignited an apparent revolution:

the student rebellion became fully juvenile and social, bringing in high-school students, young workers, agitating the intelligentsia, bringing in the working world by means of a large general strike that paralysed the state for a month. In short, French May '68 was a generalized explosion in a society that was agitated by no economic or political crisis whatsoever.²¹

The *événements*²² synthesized a combination of pressures:

a rapidly expanding university population which was faced with an authoritarian educational system and was provided with inadequate facilities; an entrenched conservative political regime backed by equally conservative social elites; a powerless opposition Left; an apparently sclerotic Communist Party . . . and an increasingly heterogeneous and fractured international Communist world.²³

The student population rose from 175,000 in 1957–58 to 500,000 in 1967–68. Educational institutions were overloaded, job competition increased, and students experienced a sense of marginality and insecurity that was articulated in *gauchisme*. This generation did not passively accept conditions since it 'no longer perceived [unemployment] as a periodic event in a blindly operating economic cycle but as a "culpable" and therefore "actionable" failure on the part of the political-administrative direction'.²⁴ Tension also rose as large numbers of working- and lower-middle-class students received advanced education for the first time. This magnified difficulties in a university system organized according to 'an old, outdated concept of hierarchy and authority'.²⁵ In response, one group of students was drawn to revolutionary radicalism: 'in fact, it was in utopian and non-constructive experience that they built a future for all of society'.²⁶ However, most students and the rest of the population were ultimately not interested in utopian political change. Labour unions, teachers, civil servants and students demanded concrete social transformations. When de Gaulle accepted responsibility for the rigid system and promised reform, many returned to private concerns and so legitimated 'bourgeois' institutions.

A series of savage student-police battles nevertheless encouraged extreme-left faith in violent direct action. One part of the extreme left saw such violence as pedagogical. It thought that police brutality revealed the repressive nature of the regime. Another group viewed force as a tool to respond to state violence. Student and strike self-defence units were organized to serve as security services at demonstrations. Still another group believed that self-defence was an individual responsibility. All three groups believed that violence had not been properly used in May 1968. Influenced by Fanon and Third World revolutionaries, *gauchistes* argued that violent direct action would facilitate the seizure of power by a revolutionary vanguard, that is, by student organizations led by an extreme-left social and political avant-garde. They transcended the UNEF anti-war struggle and conceived 'a form of organization that aimed to insert politics into everyday life'.²⁷ They were obsessed by the 'central role of intellectuals in revolutionary struggle'²⁸ and claimed to be a revolutionary elite acting in

the name of the people. The Trotskyist *Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire* (JCR) and Maoist UJCml (*Union des jeunesses communistes – marxistes-léninistes* – Union of Communist Youths – Marxist-Leninist) enthusiastically adopted the idea that *groupuscules* could instigate socialist revolution:

As an avant-garde dictating the positions that the student and worker base should adopt on the 'revisionism' of the French communist party . . . and the strategy of national and international revolutionary struggle, JCR leaders followed the extreme-left student political traditions . . . In fact, it seems that the UJCML had, towards general members at least, a dogmatic attitude, that of an organization possessing the correct Marxist-Leninist line and authorized to teach it as a master would to disciples.²⁹

The May movement gave the *gauchistes* an opportunity to present a new form of activism that they believed was untainted by ideology and tradition. They stressed the 'legitimacy' of the revolutionary cause over 'legality' (the regime). The May movement provided a complex set of coincidences. When the *gauchistes* later tried to use themes from May 1968, they were unable to recapture the mix of populism and *groupuscule* activism. The May movement had quickly receded and 'normalcy' returned. The link between student and social protest was broken by 1969.³⁰ Despite *gauchiste* efforts, 'serious basic debates centred on an institutional analysis of the university and its links to society did not manage to impassion more than a small minority of revolutionary militants'.³¹ One group of *gauchistes* tried to recreate the conditions for socialist revolution for five years after 1968. They believed that the outburst of radical French political utopianism in 1967–68 resembled the radicalism of the 1789, 1830 and 1848 revolutions, the Commune, 1917 army mutinies and the wartime resistance movement. However, May 1968 had low revolutionary impact since the social bases for such transformation were absent: 'the "radicalized fraction" of the working class, whose presence at the side of traditional unionists the *gauchistes* had guessed – and exaggerated – became one of the great myths inherited from May. *Gauchisme* chased the dream for ten years afterwards'.³²

Since it focused on the inevitability of revolution, anarchism strongly influenced *gauchisme*. It also nourished the *gauchiste* aversion to democratic centralism:

There could be no question of a revolutionary party acting as the guardian of class consciousness. Far from impregnating the masses with *science*, organization can only be the expression of the spontaneous consciousness of workers. Against *party communism*, *gauchisme* opposes *council communism*.³³

By means of anarchism, 'the importance of differences of race, sex, language and culture that relate neither to economics nor to a dialectic of force'³⁴ was transmitted to *gauchisme*. Anarchist workers' councils also allayed *gauchiste* concerns about the stagnation of revolution in bureaucratic organizations. Many *gauchistes* were interested by Anton Pannekoek's theory of councils, which rejected bureaucratic communism and emphasized 'everyday life' and the 'humanization' of workers. Pannekoek argued that the Russian Revolution only fostered state capitalism while workers' councils 'on the one hand represent the management method (economic-political) of socialist society and on the other an organ of revolutionary struggle that appears at a given historical stage, through which the proletariat hauls itself up to the consciousness of its tasks'.³⁵ Pannekoek argued that revolutionary workers' councils would reconcile political-economic, specialist-producer and worker-worker divisions. Since they believed that councils had appeared in May 1968, *gauchistes* adopted Pannekoek's theory of anti-capitalist direct action

outside the bourgeois forms of opposition (parliamentarianism, ministerialism) and outside socialist party paths (unionism, partisan politics). Pannekoek is persuaded that since capitalism is becoming more and more brutal and the proletariat more and more mature, wild-cat strikes and factory occupation will henceforth constitute its essential weapons.³⁶

Pannekoek said authentic revolution would be consciously constructed through workers' actions. He hoped that mass knowledge would add a spiritual dimension to revolution. His voluntarism and focus on spontaneity fitted the late 1960s' mood much more closely than did Marxist materialism.

Pannekoek's concept of direct action also had a strong effect: 'direct expression, direct action, direct exchange between diverse popular movements replaced the long-winded disputes between the Fourth and Fifth republics'.³⁷ The concept provided justification for confrontations with extreme-right groups, PCF security services and labour unions. Frequent clashes with police reflected the extreme-left obsession with revolution. *Gauchiste* influence was strong among university and high-school students, certain companies, some unions and the information industry.³⁸ Self-management, a *gauchiste* project to overcome divisions between civil society and institutions, was eventually adopted as PS policy, reluctantly recognized by the PCF and became a left-wing rhetorical standard. However, the diversity that made *gauchisme* original was fatal; 'each revolutionary combat was differently conceived: we collided en route. Given that the enemy is so close, the shocks are harsher'.³⁹ After May 1968, many *gauchistes* were 'crazy about the proletariat' and gave 'the working class the

main role in the coming revolutions so as to prepare it for its historic mission. Workers . . . were so present in our fantasies that it became necessary for all of us to meet.'⁴⁰ Although many *gauchistes* soon realized that the messianic class was not interested in revolution, they continued to champion revolutionary direct action.

The *Mouvement du 22 mars*⁴¹ was the most original *gauchiste* group. It was led by Daniel Cohn-Bendit. While Trotskyists and Maoists drew on left-wing ideological and organizational antecedents, the *22 mars* resembled North American activism and perhaps best corresponded to the urban society France became in the 1960s. The group's orientations and methods were closely linked to May 1968; 'the dynamic . . . came from its talkative, joyous, aggressive, innocent, overexcited and audacious spontaneity'.⁴² For its part, the *22 mars* was influenced by anarchism and *situationnisme*. The latter radically attacked hierarchy in universities in particular. It described them as 'hothouse factories for lower- and middle-management'.⁴³ *Situationnisme* reacted to a university system that was 'a sausage-machine which turns out people without any real culture, and incapable of thinking for themselves, but trained to fit into the economic system of a highly industrialized society'.⁴⁴ Its ideas appeared after a group in the University of Strasbourg UNEF and AFGES (*Association fédérative générale des étudiants de Strasbourg* – General Federative Association of Strasbourg Students) released '*Sur la misère en milieu étudiant*', an anarchist, Dadaist and surrealist attack on the Gaullist regime, capitalism, the university, PCF and unions. The text dismissed the extreme-left as 'Bolsheviks' and 'militarists', but aroused their interest by expressing

mistrust towards existing authorities in a way that no other single document had. It told the *groupuscules* some profound truths about their own intellectual hypocrisy and their submission to futile revolutionary symbols without serious thought. It did not do so, however, in the name of the system or the established anti-system. On the contrary, it managed to 'out-delegitimize' all rival groups.⁴⁵

The anti-traditional and anti-hierarchical message in *situationnisme* mixed with nonconformist criticism of the social and political establishment that had already been 'greatly accelerated by the war in Vietnam, which struck many students and intellectuals as utterly scandalous, not only because it represents an attempt by the Americans to dictate to the rest of the world, but also because the "socialist" bureaucracies are prepared to stand by and let it happen'.⁴⁶ The *22 mars* and *situationnisme* thrust a belief that social, political and cultural order had to be fundamentally reconsidered into national and international awareness.

The *22 mars* said revolutionary unity would be forged by direct action.⁴⁷ Cohn-Bendit advocated a non-Leninist revolution: 'no form of organization whatever must be allowed to dam its spontaneous flow. It must evolve its own forms and structures.'⁴⁸ The revolt gained momentum 'when the mass sit-ins began outside the closed faculty, concretizing the theme of the "critical university" which thus acquired a fully French (not imported) quality'.⁴⁹ Cohn-Bendit put students into direct contact with German student radicals. When Rudi Dutschke was wounded in Berlin on 11 April 1968, French students were strongly affected. Coming close on the heels of the deaths of Guevara and Martin Luther King, the incident fed a view that counter-revolution was under way and violence was credible. Cohn-Bendit endorsed a variety of methods for direct action and revolutionary agitation: 'a host of insurrectional cells, be they ideological groups, study groups – we can even use street gangs'.⁵⁰ Although *situationnisme* rejected Leninism, Trotskyism, Maoism and Guevarism, it drew all groups together by claiming a 'Marxist' perspective based on the 'examples of the Paris Commune, the 1905 Soviets, Catalan workers' experiments in May 1937. They viewed the proletariat as the only revolutionary class, without at the same time rigorously defining it'.⁵¹ May 1968 was seen as the first of a series of strikes rather than a single event. However, anti-hierarchical ideology and profound hostility to organization did not give *22 mars* the means to sustain struggle and it faded along with May's euphoria. Anti-hierarchical ideals and concepts of a self-directed mass movement were exploited by others; 'that which remains are the JCR's rigid Leninist structures and the strong mythological structures of Maoist doctrine'.⁵² The *22 mars* fundamentally influenced *gauchisme* by linking radical student politics to social unrest. The group believed that a burgeoning youth culture and diffuse optimism⁵³ made revolution imminent 'through direct mass action with the young, the students and the activists playing the role of the detonator or of the catalyst of the workers' revolution'.⁵⁴ Such optimism was based in sweeping criticism of

the mechanisms of constituting and transmitting knowledge and ideologies through institutions (such as the university), criticism of the process of manipulation, division and social hierarchy brought about by the possession of knowledge and ideologies, struggle against the ideologies that 'intellectual managers' are encouraged to support (scientism, technique, professionalism).⁵⁵

Finally, the Uruguayan Tupamaros also fed the *gauchiste* obsession with revolution since they appeared to link causes in the West and the Third World. Tupamaro urban terrorism seemed to respond to post-1968 lethargy despite the fact that the group's

guerrilla [activities] did not really begin until after their liquidation as a political and military force, and the setback left Uruguay subjected to a ferocious military dictatorship that emerged out of the struggles it incited. But, at the time . . . *We, the Tupamaros* was none the less bedside reading for many militants who saw, in these revolutionaries from beyond the ocean, the realization of their own desire to struggle for their people, to be loved by them, to lead them to victory: there could be no more sincere internationalist fraternity to set the world ablaze in political and emotional solidarity.⁵⁶

The comparison between France and Uruguay seemed logical in a context that was still influenced by revolutionary utopianism.

By the early 1970s, the active *gauchiste* organizations were anarchist,⁵⁷ Trotskyist⁵⁸ or Maoist.⁵⁹ However, their methods were marked by 'violent dispute by action committees, demonstrations, small papers or incendiary tracts'.⁶⁰ The limit of *gauchiste* appeal was visible when the extreme-left attempted to enter political institutions. Its electoral peak was in 1969, when LCR leader Alain Krivine received 236,000 votes and PSU leader Michel Rocard got 814,000. By 1972–73, 'the university and high-school movement ran out of steam. The rise of the union of the left, rebirth of the Socialist Party, and the appearance of an electoral solution transformed the conditions for political intervention'.⁶¹ The impact of *gauchisme* was consecrated by the 1973 PS–PCF common programme. It advocated abortion on demand, improved social and labour legislation, democratic economic planning, decentralization, press liberalization and stronger civil liberties. However, the programme also officially ended the *gauchiste* pretension to represent the only authentic force for social and political change. Accordingly, in 1973 and 1978, the *gauchiste* and extreme-left vote declined to 3.6 per cent. In the 1979 European elections, *gauchiste* candidates were absent and the extreme-left vote fell to 3.1 per cent. In June 1981, it declined to 1.3 per cent. PSU leader Huguette Bouchardeau then joined the PS cabinet. The extreme-left vote rose in 1986 and 1988, but plunged to 0.23 per cent in the June 1988 legislative elections. Soon after, former PSU leader Michel Rocard was named Prime Minister and ecologist Brice Lalonde became Environment Minister. In the June 1988 European elections, the extreme-left (*Lutte ouvrière*, the *Mouvement pour un parti des travailleurs* – MPPT – and PCF dissident *renovateurs*) received 2.42 per cent of the vote. *Gauchisme* was thus influential, but domesticated by proximity to power. It had significant attitudinal and cultural impact in professions such as teaching.⁶² *Gauchistes* also radicalized labour militancy. Occupations and management lock-ups spread through unions and extended to truckers, small shopkeepers and police unions. Through the

PSU, *gauchisme* also influenced the ecology and anti-nuclear movements.⁶³ It inspired Corsican, Breton and Occitan nationalists, feminists (through the *Mouvement de Libération des Femmes* – MLF – and *Mouvement pour la liberté de l'avortement et de la contraception*) and gays (who formed the *Front armé homosexuel révolutionnaire*).

The transmission of gauchiste ideas through Trotskyism and Maoism

Although Trotskyism and Maoism were in some ways antithetical to *gauchiste* ideology, both were affected by it in different ways. Maoism was more strongly influenced and subsequently played a more direct role in transmitting the *gauchiste* heritage to AD. The effect of *gauchisme* on French Trotskyism was less radical and varied between three organizations. The OCI was less touched. Emphasizing 'principles' over 'tactics', the OCI opposed the May movement and urged students to dismantle barricades. It had traditional views on sexuality and women's rights. The OCI was also leery of self-management due to the latter's association to CFDT (hence: Catholic) unionism. VO also urged students to adopt a working-class perspective in 1968 and not view youth as a vanguard. Renamed *Lutte ouvrière* (LO) after 1968, it used overt and clandestine tactics but rejected *gauchiste* direct action. LO subordinated sexual and women's issues to class struggle and viewed self-management as 'petit bourgeois'. LO did not adopt the ecological message of *gauchisme*. It viewed industrial development as a pre-condition for revolution and argued that safe nuclear energy could increase production. LO contested legislative and municipal elections. It nominated Arlette Laguiller in the 1974, 1981 and 1988 presidential elections. The *frankiste* LCR, which supported the Algerian FLN and influenced the UEC, was most affected by *gauchisme* and 1968. LCR leader Alain Krivine joined the group because of its anti-war stance. He was UEC Sorbonne section leader before helping to create the 'Guevarist' JCR. The youth-orientated JCR adopted *gauchiste* and '68' issues. It also advocated military unionization and conducted propaganda on military bases. JCR barricades were prominent in May 1968, when the group was aligned with 22 mars and the UNEF. Having renamed itself the *Ligue communiste* after 1968, the JCR had

a solid and well-developed organizational structure, a well-formulated ideology, and a prestigious place within what might be called the 'new revolutionary International' composed in general of all those groups who became, in the late sixties, the challengers of the existing order. But the main asset of the *Ligue* has probably been Krivine himself, a very energetic and eloquent personality.⁶⁴

The LCR appeared after the *Ligue communiste* was banned in 1973. It viewed issues in tactical rather than strategic terms in order to prevent the splinters that plague French Trotskyism and avoid Soviet-style 'bureaucratization'. The LCR was very *gauchiste*. It tolerated factions, guaranteed factional representation on executive bodies, freely circulated all viewpoints and allowed public disagreement with majority decisions. Sympathy groups in factories, neighbourhoods, universities and high schools paralleled the main organization. The LCR advocated worker councils to control the workplace and state in a period of co-management after armed revolution. The group wanted to progressively institute self-management to give workers time to learn economic-administrative skills. The LCR viewed technology as a potential liberation from mindless labour. This 'qualitative' orientation was its hallmark. It adopted feminist, gay and anti-nuclear issues in the 1970s and consistently saw youth as a social vanguard. The LCR also actively supported Third World revolution, especially the Vietnamese struggle against the US. It rejected guerrilla warfare after 1977. LCR *gauchisme* included direct action tactics, frequent demonstrations and violence against fascists and racists. Krivine ran for president in 1969 and 1974.

Maoists were more intimately connected to *gauchisme* than were Trotskyists. Many splits occurred among Maoist groups over the best way to oppose capitalism, imperialism and the mainstream left. French anarchist and labour traditions influenced Maoism in contradictory ways. In particular, references to spontaneous mass strikes (in 1936 and May 1968) contrasted the hierarchical authoritarianism in Maoist theory.⁶⁵ However, Mao's 'mass line' suited French political traditions because it called for direct links between revolutionaries and the population. Maoists 'coexisted' in the UEC until they were expelled in February 1966. They then formed the UJCml. They found the PCMLF too rigid and its middle-aged militants less appealing than the 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' (GPCR). The Red Guard movement strongly affected the UJCml. It paid little attention to pre-May 1968 tensions until the GPCR prodded it into increased activity. The UJCml initially tried to mobilize the working class in factories. During May 1968, it argued that barricades should be removed until working class support was secure. After May ended, a 'liquidationist' UJCml majority said the regime survived because the group had been obsessed by an 'elitist' and 'petit-bourgeois' view of workers. The group then split. Members either joined the PCMLF, turned to textual study or experimented with new political forms and ideas. The latter, called *maoïstes* or *maos*, were strongly affected by *gauchisme*. They had several ideologies and strategies. Two noteworthy 'anti-hierarchical' Maoist groups were *Vive la révolution* (VLR – Long Live Revolution) and *Gauche*

prolétarienne (GP – Proletarian Left). VLR tried to organize Citroën plant workers for revolutionary action and played a significant role in the post-1968 cultural explosion. It focused on sex, women's liberation and homosexuality as part of an examination of 'everyday life'. After the VLR journal *Tout* explicitly examined homosexuality, lesbianism and free love, a scandal led to the group's dismantlement.⁶⁶

The second Maoist group, the GP, was called *mao-spontex* because it advocated tactical spontaneity. The GP and its newspaper, *La Cause du peuple* (CDP – Cause of the People), appeared in autumn 1968. Like other *gauchistes*, the GP rejected Leninism and was obsessed by the *événements*: 'what we learned in May '68 was that the working class can think and provoke thought.'⁶⁷ The GP believed that the Fifth Republic was weak and ripe for revolution. May 1968 was seen as the

first stage in the revolutionary process in France . . . The mass strike and mass violence in Spring 1968 are part of the revolutionary process . . . These events are only meaningful if they are understood as a stage of this process, resolutely turned towards socialism.⁶⁸

The members of *22 mars* soon joined the GP. The two organizations shared

weak structures – in reality, non-Leninist – and a taste for spectacular and symbolic action, the most typical of which were, in Spring 1970, distribution of free Metro tickets to workers – as a protest against fare increases – and the 'pillage' of the luxury food store Fauchon in the name of immigrant workers in shanty-towns.⁶⁹

The GP said youth rebellion was valuable since 'it provoked the working class to take up its historic mission as the universal class'.⁷⁰ Its position was based on an interpretation of the GPCR and the Vietnam War:

For the first time we believed, a people had been able not to take power, but to criticize the mechanisms through which power, even if 'popular', ceaselessly escapes those in whose name it is exercised only to be turned against them . . . For the first time, we believed, a people had found themselves capable of guiding those who claimed to lead them, rather than letting themselves be led.⁷¹

Belief in the working class did not prevent the GP from conducting violent 'exemplary action' against the government, PCF and labour unions.⁷² The group argued that action was needed after May 1968 since *gauchistes* were isolated and subject to 'bourgeois manipulation' through the apparent success of legal social change. The GP response supported any action that would 'enlarge the field of opposition between legitimacy and legality'.⁷³

The GP believed that conditions would allow revolutionaries to by-pass the Soviet model of revolution. It declared that, for the first time in 50 years, revolutionaries 'once again command historical evolution'.⁷⁴

Faithful to French communist tradition, the GP tried to mobilize the working class. This led directly to conflict with the government, Renault management and the CGT. It also organized secondary school students, pointing to the example of a brutally repressed high-school student demonstration that had occurred on 11 November 1940. To foment non-armed local, regional and national violence, GP strategy championed 'intended violence, justifying itself by clear-cut symbolism of struggle and civil war'.⁷⁵ The GP said that France in the late 1960s resembled the France of 1943. Its statements had a military tone:

everything will be conceived in terms of war. Taking up the slogan: 'We are all partisans', born at Fiat in Turin, where it was only a moment of rebellion, the *Gauche prolétarienne* sees itself as the seed of the wartime resistance movement, in a universe wherein the State and its repressive forces represent the Nazis, and the PC-CGT are the collaborators.⁷⁶

GP factory agitation sought to pick up on existing sabotage and so-called management 'terrorism'. Committees organized violence against Metro fare increases, price rises in Renault company restaurants, and differential factory salaries. The GP said all workers should develop equal competency and receive equal pay. It provoked confrontations with supervisory personnel and the CGT that climaxed in Pierre Overney's murder.⁷⁷ All of these acts fitted its belief that revolutionaries had to lead a new resistance movement: 'armed struggle is part of the tradition of proletarian resistance in France. Anti-Nazi armed struggle still strikes deep roots in the present-day working class, nourished by the deeds of the FTP (*Francs-tireurs partisans* – Partisan Sharpshooters).'⁷⁸ The GP vision recalled Saint-Just: 'from the beginning: Justice is the Revolution'.⁷⁹ When the government arrested CDP editors and banned the GP in March 1970, the 'ex-GP' appeared. In 1970–71, the ex-GP organized action committees in enterprises and schools. Daring acts occurred in the name of the rights of Renault workers, immigrants, peasants and convicts. Jean-Paul Sartre gave the CDP considerable legitimacy by serving as editor and explaining that for the GP 'theory follows practice'.⁸⁰ Although Jean-Luc Godard, Simone Signoret, Jane Fonda and François Maspero publicly stated support, the GP gradually alienated extreme-left sympathy.

The GP opposed price increases, supported egalitarian job tactics and physically attacked racist supervisors to encourage greater Arab and African immigrant worker militancy. It drew attention to immigrant

housing, decrying shanty-towns (in PCF-run Argenteuil), squats, ghettos and foreign worker residences. After the Six-Day War, the GP tried to appeal to North African workers by supporting

the Palestinian struggle: the State of Israel shall be swept away, the Jews will not be persecuted. We exalted Fedayin actions without nuance. El Fata and the FDLP are similarly applauded, American imperialism, Zionism and bourgeois Arabs are amalgamated in the name of the just liberation war.⁸¹

A GP rural programme sent militants to assist protest by small-town merchants despite charges that the latter were petit-bourgeois and *poujadiste*. In the name of decolonization and indigenous struggle, the GP also aided the Breton and Occitan independence movements and farmer protests. The ex-GP realized that farmers were under government and EEC pressure to expand or quit farming. It argued that farmers' spiritual relation to the land could not be incorporated in the classical Marxist theory of alienated factory work. Although the GP thought Stalinist collectivization responded to rural problems, it concluded that farmers needed to decide this for themselves. Prisoners' rights also became an important area for agitation. Arrested GP members claimed political prisoner status. The organization *Secours rouge*⁸² and prisoners' families arranged demonstrations. Trials were used to publicize prison conditions. In 1970, 30 GP hunger-strikers demanded political status, the abolition of solitary confinement, improved visiting rights and better conditions. The government granted them access to certain facilities and recognized the political nature of slogans painted on walls. GP and Maoist prisoners led a series of prison revolts in 1971–72.

The GP never claimed responsibility for incidents. It maintained that antagonisms resulted from capitalism. Although critics responded that it lacked an intelligible ideology, GP theory had several discernible elements. Above all, the GP and ex-GP were anti-hierarchical. They aimed to reshape political power and severely curtail government–society intermediaries through 'direct democracy based on power mechanisms – decentralized power mechanisms in enterprises and all areas of society'.⁸³ They also argued that practice guides theory and that no Marxist or Marxist-Leninist precept was unassailable. They tried to base concrete political action on Mao's view that

in social practice, the process of coming into being, developing and passing away is infinite, and so is the process of coming into being, developing and passing away in human knowledge . . . The movement of change in the world of objective reality is never-ending and so is man's cognition of truth through practice.⁸⁴

Rejecting hierarchy and leadership, the GP believed that revolutionaries needed 'to link their leadership closely with the demands of the vast masses, and to combine general calls closely with particular guidance, so as to smash the subjectivist and bureaucratic methods of leadership completely'.⁸⁵ In this light, Leninist parties were considered isolated from people's interests. The GP drew radically egalitarian conclusions from Mao's statement that 'to die for the people is weightier than Mount Tai'.⁸⁶ However, its effort to 'serve the people' distorted Mao's mass line. The GP sought to follow rather than formulate a mass line. The organization thought that permanence and hierarchy were qualities that contradicted any movement that temporarily attempted to aid the masses. Hierarchy was seen as a capitalist tool to control through work, salary and race. In rejecting hierarchy, the GP also repudiated class categories. It believed that technological innovation perpetuated capitalist hierarchy, the division of labour, alienation and inequality. The GP drew on Mao's concept of 'configuration of the struggle'. It said 'the people' were fundamental to struggle and set its actions in a general war against exploitation. The view resulted from criticism of the UJCml in 1968. The GP concluded that all struggle against the established order, whether by lumpen-proletariat, immigrants, youth, farmers, shopkeepers, nationalists or workers, should be supported since they fostered revolutionary consciousness. The position was drawn from Mao's view that 'man, in varying degrees, comes to know the different relations between man and man, not only through his material life but also through his political and cultural life'.⁸⁷ Wage-earners and underpaid workers who supported capitalism were labelled enemies. The GP was unsympathetic to security personnel, subway workers and police in an attempt to revive a radical Jacobin focus on 'the people'.

GP non-traditional methods were based on a 'mass line' in which:

all correct leadership is necessarily 'from the masses, to the masses'. This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action.⁸⁸

GP praxis was based on a concept of 'qualitative' struggle. The group supported all challenges to the socio-political system since they 'throw into question an entire section of prohibitions upon which bourgeois society functions'.⁸⁹ Given that 'whoever wants to know a thing has no way of doing

so except by coming into contact with it',⁹⁰ certain struggles were judged to be more advanced because they were 'illegal'. Any transgression of the 'bourgeois capitalist state' was positively evaluated. Confronting the PCF, PS and labour unions was favoured since these organizations were seen as tools of domination. 'Creative' struggles such as self-governing committees and student occupations of university faculties were also used. By refusing 'the rules of the game' and using illegal acts, the GP tried to oblige the state to show its repressive teeth.

The Nouvelle résistance populaire (NRP)

The GP argued that revolution needed encouragement by a disciplined avant-garde and 'while awaiting the conflagration, the revolution remained ideological and symbolic'.⁹¹ It carried out dramatic raids on luxury stores to catch public attention and raise tension. Within its world-view, 'revolution was like theatre, a show that depicted the war to come'.⁹² The GP also used 'working class' targets to increase tension between strikers, employers and the government. It focused on workers since the Chinese revolution taught that this method was 'a shortcut, an instrument for accelerated learning'.⁹³ As a result, the GP was not as socially representative as the 'May Movement', whose participants eventually accepted, adapted or resigned themselves to more traditional activism. As their self-appointed inheritor, the GP ignored divergent interpretations of *les événements*. As Hamon and Rotman note,

The first misunderstanding of May relates to its initial improvisation. A spontaneous, libertarian, weakly politicized, individualist, modernizing current without a specific project donned the garb of quintessentially 'professional' *gauchisme*: the escapees from the crises in the UEC, JEC and UNEF who grafted their heritage and archaisms on a movement that did not at all resemble them, but which urgently needed their unfaithful means of expression.⁹⁴

Like the Italian BR, the GP insisted that ideology was an 'immunization against a refutation of the grounds for armed struggle through shared experience'.⁹⁵ Violence increased after the GP created the NRP to carry out guerrilla-style acts. The NRP moved the remnants of May and *gauchisme* even further from any social movement since 'the GP recruited on the fringes and used nearly delinquent yobbos in its actions'.⁹⁶ In fact, the NRP resembled more closely the organization and targets of the *Noyaux armés pour l'autonomie populaire* (NAPAP - Armed Nuclei for Popular Autonomy) and AD than it did *proletariat populaire*.

we were not a mass movement; we were a few militants who tried to act in conformity with the will of the masses, but who were all the same only an organization . . . we had to project an image of what the people would be like later, after taking power; and what they would do is punish the guilty, although they would try to re-educate most of them.⁹⁷

One of the NRP's earliest acts was the kidnapping of national assembly deputy Michel de Grailly on 26 November 1970. He was soon released. However, the group radicalized further when Overney's murderer received a light sentence. *Groupe Pierre Overney* then kidnapped Renault executive Robert Nogrette on 8 March 1972 to show 'that the Maoists would not leave a crime unpunished, that they would retain their ability to initiate'.⁹⁸ Police pressure, left-wing renewal, the Munich Olympic massacre and Chilean coup soon convinced GP leaders that guerrilla violence was inappropriate and would lead 'inevitably and very rapidly to total destruction [of the GP]'.⁹⁹ The powerful appeal of Latin American guerrilla warfare faded as the GP and NRP realized what the Chilean MIR had helped provoke:

Allende's assassination was the final blow . . . It was not sufficient to incriminate the martyred president's legalism. The role of small armed groups, extreme-left adventurism and the MIR needed to be considered. Neither a political position that respected traditions nor semi-clandestine movements were able or knew how to prepare working class self-defence.¹⁰⁰

Realizing that 'the masses will not win militarily' and that 'armed struggle is a murderous utopia',¹⁰¹ the GP decided to abandon revolutionary violence. Convinced that they were redundant and never having conceived the GP as a permanent organization, the Maoists had little difficulty accepting self-dissolution. They saw that 'the alternative was now between terrorist escalation and dissolution'.¹⁰² However, a 'lumpen-proletariat' NRP rump clung to the myth of armed struggle and only disarmed after show-downs that 'parodied the climax of a Western film'.¹⁰³ Although many members then moved into the culture industry,¹⁰⁴ the GP's revolutionary ideals were adopted by NAPAP and AD.

In its brief existence, the GP incorporated several elements of French egalitarian socialism:

In its refusal to fetter workers with a hierarchical political organization and its emphasis upon action and clear cleavages within the industrial plant itself, it resembled the thought of the French anarcho-syndicalist theorist Georges Sorel. In the value which it placed upon

rural life and the relationship between land and the people who work it, it shared the sentiments of the Genevan Rousseau and the French anarchist Proudhon. It shared both Proudhon's distaste for hierarchical authoritarianism and the negative view of the division of labour held by the French utopian thinker Fourier.¹⁰⁵

Like revolutionaries in 1789, 1830, 1848, 1871 and 1944, the GP took up arms in the name of social equality. Its references to the people recalled 1789 and radical Jacobinism. Although it rejected the idea of a vanguard, the GP attempt to enlighten the masses was a form of revolutionary elitism that resembled *blanquisme*. However, France in the late 1960s and early 1970s was not revolutionary. The GP criticized society and called for 'authenticity', but did not inspire mass revolt. Armed struggle did not suit conditions. Indeed, despite its enormous impact, even May 1968 was not revolutionary. The discrepancy between May 1968 and revolution eventually incited the extreme left to re-evaluate its methods and goals. Former *gauchistes* asked whether May was a 'sad diversion, modern insurrection, betrayed revolution or the original phase of class struggle?'¹⁰⁶

French society was less rigid after May 1968, but still tied to a market economy. As *gauchisme* waned, West German and Italian extreme-left ideas encouraged a minority to believe that violence could compensate for left-wing complicity with the establishment. These autonomists developed out of anarcho-communist university groups in the early 1970s.¹⁰⁷ Committed to radical socialist transformation and hostile to organization, the autonomists 'are still influenced by situationism. They strongly criticize *gauchiste*, Trotskyist, and Maoist movements or the PSU, and reproach them for their old-style analysis, and bureaucratic and inefficient practices.'¹⁰⁸ Their rejection of traditional politics and the PCF, hostility to social norms and faith in revolutionary violence transmitted a *gauchiste* style and disposition to AD. The autonomists were:

inheritors of the cultural dissent of the 1970s. They are very suspicious of party politics as a whole and work preferably in local associations or in parallel, underground structures: communes, environmentalist groups, including the very few who are tempted by terrorism . . .¹⁰⁹

The autonomists believed that the extreme left 'dumped' non-intellectuals when offered an establishment role. The autonomists advocated violent revolutionary direct action to combat this hypocrisy, but conditions had domesticated their potential clientele. PCF, Trotskyist and Maoist groups had channelled dissent into their organizations. The absence of severe social or political crisis effectively deradicalized, and even

depoliticized, many extreme leftists. In any event, the autonomists and later groups overestimated the GP rejection of French left-wing traditions. The GP stance was much less radical than that of, for example, Ulrike Meinhoff. The GP unquestioningly placed the French working class on a pedestal. The history of the German working class precluded this since it includes both the KPD and the Nazis and so militates against 'populism'. GP idealism eventually curtailed the drift to violence in favour of traditional radical 'pedagogy'.¹¹⁰

Gauchisme never regained popularity. The multiplicity of social and political groups that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s rejected utopianism and tried to integrate change into existing structures:

the women's movement, ethnic minorities' movements, radical trade-unionists (the CFDT 'basists' especially in the public sector, new general practitioners' and lawyers' unions etc.), immigrant workers and 'second generation' immigrants, sexual minorities, radical culture associations (from artists to residents' associations such as the *Confédération syndicale du cadre de vie*), communes, squatters, conscripts, and, after 1974, ecologists – were exclusively concerned with a sectional aspect of society and with the task of changing radically their own lives, of experimenting with totally different forms.¹¹¹

Only a fringe remained faithful to *gauchisme* and held onto the view of May 1968 as a near-revolution. Rejecting Leninism and attacking the USSR and PCF as hierarchical and rigid were no longer radical. International and domestic conditions removed revolution from serious discussion. The post-war boom evaporated and France became a full-fledged 'consumer' society. Cohn-Bendit now explains 1968 as part of a generational shift: 'we were the first generation to experience, through a stream of images and sounds, the physical and daily presence of the entire world'.¹¹² The *gauchistes* reintroduced "ultimate ends", proposing to do away *now* with any form of market economy and wage slavery and started even to question the value of science and of progress itself.¹¹³ However, their radicalism did not ultimately encourage revolutionary politics so much as usher forth a mass-marketing 'Bourbon Restoration'.

NOTES

1. VO was initially called the *Union communiste internationaliste*.
2. 'Un "pur" affrontement droite-gauche. Beaucoup de représentants prestigieux de la gauche laïque et républicaine, aux états de service incontestable dans le Front populaire – l'Espagne, la Résistance, l'antistalinisme – prirent dès le premier jour fait et cause pour le maintien de l'Algérie dans la République française, pour des motifs jacobins, patriotiques, universalistes.' Daniel Lindenberg, 'Un anniversaire interminable: 1968–1988', in *La France en politique 1988* (Paris: Esprit

- Fayard Seuil, 1988), p.191.
3. Mitterrand won 45.5 per cent of the vote.
 4. Philip Cerny, 'The Fall of Two Presidents and Extraparliamentary Opposition: France and the United States in 1968', in *Government and Opposition*, Vol.5, No.1 (1970), p.292.
 5. 'De fait, de 1961, jusqu'au début des années soixante-dix, le Parti communiste français refoula le "stalinisme".' Georges Lavau, *Les enfants de Barbe-Bleue et le cabinet sanglant: les partis communistes français et italien et le refoulement du stalinisme*, in *Les interprétations du stalinisme* (ouvrage publié sous la direction de Évelyne Pisier-Kouchner) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), p.111.
 6. 'Il fallait condamner le père indigne mais ne renier ni son sang ni sa race.' Ibid.
 7. See Jean Touchard, *La gauche en France depuis 1900* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1977), pp.260-7.
 8. 'Franc-tireurs du communisme, enfants terribles d'une Eglise en crise permanente, protestants radicalisés, juifs vivant le deuil impossible de la Shoah sans les mots pour le dire'. Lindenberg, p.190.
 9. 'Un acteur politique intervenant sur la base d'une analyse méthodique de "chacune des réalités dont vivent tous les citoyens".' Nicole de Maupéou-Abboud, *Ouverture du ghetto étudiant: la gauche étudiante à recherche d'un nouveau mode d'intervention politique (1960-1970)* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1974), pp.19-20.
 10. 'La première organisation qui après le choc de 1958 ait osé défier de Gaulle.' Alain Monchablon, *Histoire de l'UNEF de 1956 à 1968* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), p.68.
 11. 'Une rupture de masse avec le stalinisme à la française.' Ibid., p.143.
 12. 'On commençait à trouver singulièrement conformistes et ennuyeux les apparatchiks thoréziens. Leur légalisme mollasson, leur discipline grise, leur absence totale d'imagination, leur révérence absolue à l'égard des Soviétiques, leur mépris absolu de la démocratie interne, leur refus des débats qui de Cuba à Pékin en passant par Rome agitaient le mouvement communiste, leur conformisme intellectuel en béton, leur fermeture absolue à la vie moderne, leur morale petite-bourgeoise agressivement imposée, tout cela détachait rapidement les jeunes de la ligne et les faisait dériver dangereusement vers d'autres pôles idéologiques. Au fond, le PCF semblait participer à sa manière de la vieille société française, autoritaire et archaïque.' Laurent Joffrin, *Mai 68: Histoire des événements* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1988), p.41.
 13. 'Small groups'. All further references to groupuscules will be in the original French.
 14. Ehud Sprinzak, 'France: The Radicalisation of the New Left', in *Social and Political Movements in Western Europe* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), p.289.
 15. Joffrin, p.42.
 16. 'Lecteurs d'Althusser, de Gramsci ou de Sartre, chrétiens progressistes ou anars, ils étaient – plus ou moins – tennillés par un complexe d'illégitimité, par la fatalité de la bâtardise: seule la classe messianique, la classe ouvrière, la classe anticapitaliste par origine et par destination, malgré les berceuses des "révisos", malgré le carcan des "bureaucrates", pouvait – un jour – recevoir, transcrire leur révolte.' Hervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman, *Génération: 2. Les années de poudre* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1988), p.663.
 17. 'Le suffrage universel est une ruse du pouvoir bourgeois.' P. Gavi, J.-P. Sartre, P. Victor, *On a raison de se révolter* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), p.84.
 18. 'Le caractère révolutionnaire de leur objectifs d'une part, la révolution qu'ils prônent étant autant culturelle que politique; leur style d'action d'autre part.' Jacques Chapsal and Alain Lancelot, *La vie politique en France depuis 1940* (Paris: PUF, 1979), p.638.
 19. Joffrin, pp.106-7.
 20. International events included Régis Debray's trial in Bolivia, Che Guevara's murder, the start of US–North Vietnamese peace talks, an attack on West German radical leader Rudi Dutschke, the Prague Spring, US urban riots, Martin Luther King's assassination and Fatah's first attacks on Israel.
 21. 'La révolte étudiante devient amplement juvénile et sociale, entraînant lycéens, jeunes ouvriers, agitant l'intelligentsia, entraînant le monde du travail dans une grande grève générale, paralysant l'Etat pendant un mois. En bref, le mai 68 français se distingue par son caractère de déflagration généralisée, et cela dans une société que n'agitait nulle crise, économique ou politique.' Morin, 'Mais (1978)', *Mai 68: La brèche suivie de vingt ans après* (Paris: Éditions Complexe, 1988), pp.147-8.

22. 'Events'. This is commonly used to refer to May 1968 in France.
23. Neill Nugent and David Lowe, *The Left in France* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p.186.
24. Claus Offe, 'Structural Problems of the Capitalist State', *German Political Studies*, Vol.1 (1974), p.50.
25. Cerny, p.301.
26. 'En fait c'est dans l'expérience utopique et non constructive qu'elle a construit un avenir qui concerne toute la société.' Edgar Morin, 'La commune étudiante', *Mai 68*, pp.32-3.
27. 'Une forme d'organisation originale visant à insérer la politique dans la vie quotidienne.' Maupéou-Abboud, p.206.
28. 'Rôle moteur des intellectuels dans la lutte révolutionnaire.' Ibid.
29. 'En tant qu'avant garde dictant à la base étudiante et ouvrière les positions qu'elle devait adopter sur le "révisionnisme" du Parti Communiste Français . . . et sur la stratégie des luttes révolutionnaires aux plans national et international, les dirigeants de la JCR se situaient dans la tradition du politisme étudiant d'extrême-gauche . . . En fait, il semble que l'UJCM ait eu, dans son rapport avec ses militants de base au moins, une attitude dogmatique, celle d'une organisation détenant la juste ligne marxiste-léniniste et autorisée, à ce titre, à l'enseigner magistralement.' Ibid., pp.206-7.
30. Maupéou-Abboud, p.367.
31. 'Des débats de fond axés sur l'analyse institutionnelle de l'université et de son rapport à la société ne parviennent à passionner qu'une faible minorité de militants révolutionnaires.' Ibid., p.377.
32. 'Cette "fraction radicalisée" de la classe ouvrière, dont les gauchistes devinent – et exagèrent – la présence à côté des syndiqués traditionnels, sera l'un des grands mythes hérités de Mai. En son nom, le gauchisme va courir dix ans après son rêve.' Joffrin, pp.301-2.
33. 'Il ne peut être question de parti révolutionnaire, dépositaire de la conscience de classe. Loin d'apporter sa science et d'en imprégner les masses, l'organisation ne peut figurer que l'expression de la conscience spontanée des travailleurs. Au communisme de parti le gauchisme oppose le communisme de conseils.' Richard Gombin, *Les origines du gauchisme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1971), p.103.
34. 'L'importance des différences de race, de sexe, de langue, de culture qui ne relèvent pas de l'économique, ni d'une dialectique de force.' Anne Steiner and Loïc Debray, *La fraction armée rouge: Guérilla urbaine en Europe occidentale* (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1987), p.226.
35. 'Représentent d'une part le mode de gestion (politico-économique) de la société socialiste, d'autre part l'organe de lutte révolutionnaire qui apparaît à un stade historique donné, celui où le prolétariat s'est hissé à la conscience de ses tâches.' Gombin, p.118.
36. 'En dehors des formes bourgeoises d'opposition (parlementarisme, ministérialisme), et en dehors des voies du socialisme du parti (syndicalisme, politique partisane). Pannekoek est persuadé que, le capitalisme devenant de plus en plus brutal, le prolétariat de plus en plus mûr, la grève sauvage et l'occupation d'usines constitueront désormais ses armes essentielles.' Ibid.
37. 'L'expression directe, l'action directe, l'échange direct entre les divers mouvements populaires remplacèrent les disputes bavardes entre IV^e et V^e République.' Alain Geismar, *L'engrenage terroriste* (Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1981), p.22.
38. Examples of this impact are the gauchiste presence in the CFDT and cultural impact through publications such as *Charlie-Hebdo* and *Libération*.
39. 'A chacun son combat vers une révolution que l'on voit différente: on se heurte en chemin, plus l'ennemi est proche et plus les chocs sont rudes.' Michel-Antoine Burnier and Bernard Kouchner, *La France sauvage* (Paris: Éditions Publications Premières, 1972), p.151.
40. 'Mordus du prolétariat' and 'à la classe ouvrière le rôle principal des révolutions à venir, de la préparer à sa mission historique. Les ouvriers . . . étaient si présents dans nos fantasmes qu'il fallait bien qu'un jour nous nous rencontrions.' Cohn-Bendit, *Nous l'avons tant aimée, la révolution* (Paris: Éditions Bernard Barrault, 1986), p.60.
41. '22 March Movement'. All further references to the group will be made thus: 22 mars.
42. 'La dynamique, elle . . . vient de ce spontanéisme bavard, joyeux, agressif, innocent, surexcité, audacieux.' Morin, 'Mais (1978)', p.150.
43. 'Usines d'élevage hâtif de petits cadres et de cadres moyens.' Extract from *De la misère en milieu étudiant considérée sous ses aspects économique, politique, psychologique, sexuel, et notamment intellectuel, et de quelques moyens pour y remédier* (Strasbourg: A.F.G., 1966) reprinted in Alain Schnapp and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Journal de la commune étudiante* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil,

- 1988), p.70.
44. Daniel and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism: the Left-Wing Alternative* (trans. by Arnold Pomerans) (London: André Deutsch, 1968), p.27.
 45. Sprinzak, p.289.
 46. Daniel and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, p.32.
 47. Schnapp and Vidal-Naquet, p.171.
 48. Daniel and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, p.253.
 49. Vladimir Fisera, *Writing on the Wall, France, May 1968: A Documentary Anthology* (London: Allison and Busby, 1978), p.18.
 50. Daniel and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit, p.257.
 51. 'Exemples de la Commune de Paris, des Soviets de 1905, des expériences ouvrières catalanes de mai 1937. Ils considèrent le prolétariat comme la seule classe révolutionnaire, sans toutefois le définir avec rigueur.' Jacques Capdevielle and René Mouriaux, *Mai 68: l'entre-deux de la modernité, Histoire de trente ans* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1988), p.181.
 52. 'Ce qui demeure, ce sont les structures léninistes rigides de la JCR et les structures mythologiques fortes de la doctrine Mao.' Morin, 'Mais (1978)', p.151.
 53. See Maupeou-Abboud, *Ouverture du ghetto étudiant*.
 54. Vladimir Fisera, 'The French New Left and the left-wing regime', in Stuart Williams (ed.), *Socialism in France: From Jaurès to Mitterrand* (London: Frances Pinter for the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France, 1983), p.155.
 55. 'Critique des mécanismes de constitution et de transmission des savoirs et des idéologies au travers de certaines institutions (dont l'université), critique des processus de manipulation, de division et de hiérarchisation sociale entraînés par la possession de ces savoirs et de ces idéologies, lutte contre les idéologies, auxquelles les "cadres intellectuelles" sont incités à adhérer (scientisme, technisme, professionnalisme).' Maupeou-Abboud, p.378.
 56. 'Guérilla n'a vraiment démarré qu'après leur liquidation en tant que force politique et militaire, et alors que cet échec laissait l'Uruguay soumis à une féroce dictature militaire, issue des affrontements qu'ils avaient suscités. Mais, à l'époque... Nous les Tupamaros n'en fut pas moins le livre de chevet de bien des militants, qui voyaient réalisé, chez ces révolutionnaires d'au-delà de l'océan, leur désir de lutter pour leur peuple, d'en être aimé, de le conduire à la victoire: fraternité internationaliste on ne peut plus sincère, embrassant le monde entier dans sa solidarité politique et affective.' Geismar, *L'engrenage terroriste*, p.42.
 57. The Fédération anarchiste française and Organisation révolutionnaire anarchiste.
 58. The Front communiste révolutionnaire, Ligue communiste révolutionnaire and Lutte ouvrière.
 59. The Parti communiste révolutionnaire marxiste-léniniste and Gauche révolutionnaire marxiste-léniniste.
 60. 'La contestation violente des comités d'action, des "manifestations", des petits journaux ou des tracts d'ordre incendiaire.' Chapsal, p.460.
 61. 'Le mouvement étudiant et lycéen s'épuisait. La montée de l'union de la gauche, la renaissance du parti socialiste, l'apparition d'une solution électorale transformaient les conditions de notre intervention politique.' Génération, 2, p.514.
 62. AD leader André Olivier was a literature teacher.
 63. Vladimir Claude Fisera and Peter Jenkins, 'The Unified Socialist Party (PSU) since 1968', in *Contemporary French Political Parties*, p.112. The Vets used some gauchistes ideas in 1988 and received 10.59 per cent of the vote, which contrasted the 7.71 per cent of the once-powerful PCF.
 64. Sprinzak, p.296.
 65. For an outline of Mao's theory of Stalinism, see Jacques Broyelle, 'L'interprétation maoïste du stalinisme', in *Les interprétations du stalinisme* (ouvrage publié sous la direction de Évelyne Pisier-Kouchner) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), pp.127-38.
 66. The MLF and FHAR were formed by ex-VLR members.
 67. 'Ce qu'on apprend en mai 68, c'est que la classe ouvrière peut penser et faire penser.' Ibid., p.151.
 68. 'Première étape dans le processus révolutionnaire en France... La grève de masse et les violences de masse du printemps 1968, appartiennent au processus révolutionnaire... Elles ne prennent leurs sens que comme une étape de ce processus, résolument tourné vers le socialisme.' Alain Geismar,

- Serge July, Erlin Morane, *Vers la guerre civile* (Paris: Éditions et publications premières, 1969), p.29.
69. 'Les structures lâches – en réalité non léninistes – et le goût des actions spectaculaires et symboliques, dont les plus typiques furent, au printemps de 1970, la distribution gratuite de tickets de métro aux travailleurs – par protestation contre l'augmentation des prix – ou le "pillage" de l'épicerie de luxe Fauchon au profit des travailleurs immigrés des bidonvilles.' Schnapp and Vidal-Naquet, p.836.
 70. 'Elle provoque la classe ouvrière à prendre en charge sa mission historique de classe universelle.' Geismar, July and Morane, *Vers la guerre civile*, p.256.
 71. 'Pour la première fois, croyions nous, un peuple avait été capable non de prendre le pouvoir, mais de critiquer la reproduction des mécanismes par lequel le pouvoir, fût-il "populaire", échappe sans cesse à ceux au nom de qui il s'exerce pour se retourner contre eux... Pour la première fois, croyions nous, un peuple avait été capable non de se laisser guider, mais de guider ceux qui prétendaient le mener.' Antoine Liniers, 'Objections contre une prise d'armes', in *Terrorisme et démocratie* (Paris: Fayard, 1985), p.171.
 72. 'Action exemplaire.' Geismar, July and Morane, *Vers la guerre civile*, p.160.
 73. 'Élargir le champ d'opposition entre légitimité et légalité.' Gavi, Sartre, Victor, p.89.
 74. 'Commandement de nouveau l'évolution historique.' Geismar, July and Morane, *Vers la guerre civile*, p.27.
 75. Sprinzak, p.294.
 76. 'Tout sera pensé en termes de guerre. Reprenant le slogan: "Nous sommes tous des partisans", né à la Fiat de Turin, où il ne constituait qu'un moment de la révolte, la Gauche prolétarienne se vivra comme le germe de la Résistance, dans un univers où l'Etat et ses forces de répression représentent les nazis, et le PC-CGT, les collabos.' Geismar, *L'engrenage terroriste*, p.53.
 77. Maoist militant and GP member Pierre Overney was killed by Jean-Antoine Tramoni in front of a Renault factory in the Paris suburb of Billancourt on 25 February 1972. Tramoni was sentenced to four years in prison for homicide but freed conditionally in 1974. The murder was a rallying cause for the French extreme-left during the 1970s.
 78. 'La lutte armée fait partie de la tradition de résistance prolétarienne en France. La lutte armée antinazie plonge encore ses racines vivantes dans la classe ouvrière actuelle, nourrie de la geste des FTP (Francs-tireurs partisans).' The FTP were anti-Nazi and anti-Vichy guerrilla forces in central France. Geismar, July and Morane, *Vers la guerre civile*, p.362.
 79. 'Dès le départ: la Justice, c'est la Révolution.' Gavi, Sartre, Victor, pp.92-3.
 80. 'La pratique précède la théorie.' Ibid., p.147.
 81. 'La lutte palestinienne: l'Etat d'Israël sera balayé, les Juifs ne seront pas persécutés. On exalte sans nuances l'action des Fedayins. El Fath et le FDPLP sont applaudis semblablement, l'impérialisme américain, le sionisme et les bourgeois arabes amalgamés au nom de la juste guerre de libération.' Burnier and Kouchner, p.162.
 82. Red Aid.
 83. 'Une démocratie directe qui s'appuie sur des organes de pouvoir – des organes de pouvoir décentrés, dans l'entreprise et dans tous les domaines sociaux.' Ibid., p.108.
 84. Mao Tse-Tung, 'On Practice', in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, Vol.1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p.307.
 85. Mao Tse-Tung, 'Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership', in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, Vol.3 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p.122.
 86. Mao Tse-Tung, 'Serve the People', *ibid.*, p.177.
 87. 'On Practice', *ibid.*, p.296.
 88. 'Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership', p.119.
 89. 'C'est tout un pan du système d'interdits sur lequel fonctionne la société bourgeoise qui est dès lors mise en cause.' Geismar, July and Morane, *Vers la guerre civile*, p.162.
 90. 'On Practice', p.299.
 91. 'Que dans l'attente de l'embrasement la révolution restait idéologique, symbolique.' Génération, 2, p.419.
 92. 'La révolution idéologique était comme le théâtre, le spectacle joué de la guerre à venir.' Liniers, p.181.
 93. 'Un raccourci, un instrument d'apprentissage accéléré.' Génération, 2, p.24.
 94. 'Le premier malentendu de Mai repose sur l'improvisation initiale. Un courant spontané,

- libertaire, faiblement politisé, individualiste, modernisateur, et dépourvu de projet précis s'est donné pour encadrement la quintessence du gauchisme "professionnel": les rescapés de la crise de l'UEC, de la JEC, de l'UNEF, qui ont greffé leurs héritages, leurs archaïsmes, sur un mouvement qui s'y reconnaissait guère mais avait un urgent besoin de ses truchements infidèles.' Ibid., p.664.
95. 'Immunisation contre les démentis que l'expérience commune pourrait apporter au bien-fondé du choix stratégique de la lutte armée.' Philippe Raynaud, 'Les origines intellectuelles du terrorisme', in *Terrorisme et démocratie*, p.117.
 96. 'La GP a recruté dans les marges et utilise pour ses actions des loubaras proches de la délinquance.' Ibid., p.391.
 97. 'Nous n'étions pas un mouvement de masse; nous étions quelques militants d'une organisation qui essaie d'agir, conformément à la volonté des masses, c'est vrai, mais qui n'est tout de même qu'une organisation... nous devons donner l'image de ce que sera le peuple plus tard, lorsqu'il aura le pouvoir; et ce qu'il fera, c'est qu'il punira les coupables, mais il essaiera d'en réduire le plus grand nombre.' Jean-Pierre Le Dantec, *Les dangers du soleil* (Paris: Les Presses d'aujourd'hui, 1978), p.252.
 98. 'Que les maos ne laissent pas un crime impuni, qu'ils conservaient leur capacité d'initiative.' *Génération*, 2, p.405.
 99. 'Immanquablement et très rapidement à un écrasement total.' 'Illégalisme et guerre: Texte fondateur de la Nouvelle Résistance Populaire' (Jan. 1971) in Geismar, *L'engrenage terroriste*, pp.159-79, p.178.
 100. 'L'assassinat d'Allende a porté l'estocade... Il ne suffit pas d'incriminer le légalisme du président martyr. Il faut encore réfléchir au rôle des petits groupes armés, à l'aventurisme de l'extrême gauche, du MIR. Ni le politique respectueux ni les mouvements semi-clandestins n'ont pu, n'ont su préparer l'autodéfense de la classe ouvrière.' *Génération*, 2, p.551.
 101. 'Les masses ne vaincront pas militairement' and 'la lutte armée est utopie meurtrière'. Ibid.
 102. 'L'alternative, désormais, était entre l'escalade terroriste et la dissolution.' Ibid., p.665.
 103. 'Parodient le style dénouement de western.' Ibid., p.555.
 104. A number went to *Libération* with ex-GP Serge July. Younger members published CDP until 1978 but never had its original dynamism. Ex-GP Le Dantec returned to his native Brittany to seek an 'authentic collectivity'. Former CDP editors Le Bris and André Glucksman became *nouveaux philosophes* who systematically criticized Marxism. Alain Geismar lived in communes and returned to teaching.
 105. A. Belden Fields, 'Western Maoism: A French Interpretation' (unpublished paper, 1983).
 106. 'Divertissement triste, insurrection moderne, révolution trahie, phase originale de la lutte des classes', Capdevielle and Mouriaux, p.12.
 107. Such as *Jeunesse anarchiste communiste* (JAC), *Nouvelle Révolution*, *Mouvement Communiste Libertaire*, *Archinoir*, *L'Insurgé*, *Organisation révolutionnaire anarchiste* (ORA), *Passer Outre*, (another earlier) *Action directe*, and *Noir et Rouge*.
 108. 'Subissent l'influence du situationnisme. Ils sont très critiques à l'égard des mouvements gauchistes, trotskystes, maoïstes, ou PSU, auxquels ils reprochent leurs analyses vieillies, une pratique bureaucratique et inefficace.' Burnier and Kouchner, p.218.
 109. Fisera, 'The French New Left and the left-wing regime', p.158.
 110. The establishment of the newspaper *Libération* is a good example.
 111. Fisera, 'The French New Left and the left-wing regime', p.156.
 112. 'Nous fûmes la première génération à vivre, à travers un flot d'images et de sons, la présence physique et quotidienne de la totalité du monde.' Cohn-Bendit, *Nous l'avons tant aimée, la révolution*, p.8.
 113. Fisera, 'The French New Left and the left-wing regime', p.155.

4 The History of *Action directe*: From *Gauchisme* to Nihilism

An examination of AD's history clarifies its factional character and how personalities influenced its development. It also provides an outline of attacks and shows how they corresponded to social and political developments. In addition to the Jacobin, socialist, egalitarian, revolutionary and Bonapartist traditions set by French political history, AD was influenced by groups that were active in the 1970s and by national and international events. Despite demonstrably clear roots in French political tradition, AD was out of touch with the political realities that pertained during its period of activity. AD was influenced by the ideologies, members and methods of *Groupes d'action révolutionnaires internationalistes* (GARI – Internationalist Revolutionary Action Groups) and NAPAP. Both GARI and NAPAP linked AD to French political history in different ways. GARI provided an international perspective rooted in the Spanish Civil War that strongly influenced ADi (the Paris faction). NAPAP was a child of the post-GP period that especially served as the ADn (the Lyon faction) to May 1968. Finally, this chapter outlines AD's different phases: 1979–81; 1982–84; and 1985–87.

Both GARI and NAPAP foreshadowed AD's goals, orientations and personnel despite their separate locations and influences. GARI was based in south-western France and was particularly active in the Toulouse area and Spain between 1972 and 1979. It was strongly influenced by the anarchist traditions that anti-Franco Spanish Civil War refugees brought to France. Many Spanish expatriates who had fled into south-western France after the Spanish Civil War continued to oppose the Franco regime. This diaspora incarnated an ideal of armed struggle for social justice. From a living, legitimate source, the ideal was grafted onto a regional culture in which nonconformity and the memory of the wartime resistance movement were strong. In effect, Spanish anarchist militancy combined with local resentment of Paris-based government that stretched from the Cathar rebellions in the thirteenth century to Jean Jaurès' radical socialism. Although anarchism did not solely

determine GARI's orientations, its impact was intensified by May 1968.

Organizationally, GARI developed directly out of the anti-Franco *Mouvement ibérique de libération* (MIL – Iberian Liberation Movement). When MIL member Puig Antich was killed by Spanish police on 7 April 1974, the shock radicalized the other members. They formed GARI, swearing to eliminate all states and power, especially 'the Franco movement and its accomplices'.¹ GARI communiqués treated Spanish and French leaders with humour and derision. Like many French extreme-left groups at that time, GARI rejected Leninism. Its leader was Jean-Marc Rouillan.² Militants included several children of Spanish refugees who had settled in the Toulouse region.³ GARI tried to force the French and Belgian governments to change their policies towards the Franco regime. In 1974, the group machine-gunned a Spanish consular vehicle in Toulouse. A letter sent afterwards to the Spanish Prime Minister declared: 'Bastard ... Today we machine-gunned your car to show you and your government that we have arms and are ready to use them.'⁴ After this, GARI sabotaged a railway that led from France into Spain. On 3 May 1974, it kidnapped the Paris director of the Bank of Bilbao, Balthazar Suarez, to draw attention to 'Francoist repression in Spain'.⁵ He was soon freed unharmed. GARI also undertook robberies in Brussels, Toulouse and Paris.

GARI employed a strategy of 'economic sabotage' of resource and tourist industries to fight the Franco regime. This effort embodied anarchist methods that centred on demonstrating the ascendancy of 'social' over 'legal' power. As part of the campaign, electricity pylons that carried power from Spain into France were repeatedly damaged; explosions in a Hautes-Pyrénées village disrupted the *Tour de France*; buses carrying Spanish pilgrims to Lourdes were hit by arson; Spanish tour buses in Paris were attacked with plastic explosives; and railway stations on the French-Spanish border were hit by explosions, although these were more a form of harassment than a danger to the public. However, when Rouillan placed a bomb on a school roof near Toulouse's Spanish consulate, 11 firemen were seriously injured. Another explosion seriously hurt a police bomb-disposal expert.

GARI financed itself through robberies in Béziers and Toulouse until police inadvertently stopped members Michel Camillieri and Mario Innes Torres over a minor traffic violation in September 1974. They were soon imprisoned and investigators virtually dismantled GARI. Rouillan, Cuadrado and Delgado were arrested in December. In 1975, group activity declined to a single attack on the Paris Palais de Justice.⁶ With its members in prison, GARI was saved from complete destruction by a legal technicality. In March 1976, the *Cour de sûreté de l'Etat*⁷ ruled that GARI

had not threatened state authority, the charge being the only one then available to prosecute terrorist acts. The government had to begin a new investigation. Exploiting the government's embarrassing position, GARI's remnants threw Molotov cocktails at a Spanish consular and cultural centre in Montpellier to protest against the detention without charge of the three militants. Since it did not have a legally binding case, the government freed Rouillan, Camillieri and Innes on 25 May 1977.

May 1968 and the GP influenced AD more directly through the Paris-based Maoists in NAPAP. The group had few known members: Frédéric Oriach,⁸ Jean-Paul Gérard, Michel Lapeyre,⁹ Pascal Trillat and Régis Schleicher.¹⁰ NAPAP's first action was a murder attempt on the Spanish military attaché in France in 1975. The target, if not the assassination method, resembled those of GARI. In 1976, NAPAP murdered the Bolivian ambassador in France, Colonel Joachim Zentano Anaya, who had participated in the murder of Che Guevara. NAPAP undertook the act to establish credibility as a revolutionary group. It murdered Renault vigilante Jean-Antoine Tramoni on 23 March 1977.¹¹ The act drew directly on GP history and traditional extreme-left opposition to the Fifth Republic. The effort to establish credibility also motivated sabotage at Renault and attacks on the offices of the *Confédération française du travail*. However, because NAPAP was an isolated faction, it was incapable of mobilizing the mass support needed for revolution. A leading member, Oriach, was soon arrested, convicted and imprisoned. In October 1977, NAPAP planted a bomb near the home of Alain Peyrefitte. The latter was minister of education in May 1968, Giscard d'Estaing's justice minister in the 1970s and an editorialist for the right-wing daily *Le Figaro*. By targeting Peyrefitte, NAPAP clearly tried to wave the *gauchiste* banner. Oriach was freed in March 1980, but again arrested in July as he, Gérard and Lapeyre attempted to bomb the Paris offices of the West German railway. In 1981, the three were once again freed.

AD's formative years: 1979–80

Given its dual organizational and ideological roots, it was fitting that AD began as a loose network of *groupuscules* that shared general extreme-left orientations. The *groupuscules* had names like *Clodo* (*Comité liquidant ou détournant les ordinateurs*), *Jeune Taupe*, *Casse-Noix* and *Mouton-Enragés* that were selected to reflect this fact.¹² The practice also set a precedent. Throughout its existence, AD attack units were named to reflect current events or motives.¹³ In the late 1970s, AD's early members were usually too young to have participated in May 1968, were unemployed, but educated.

Most of their elder *gauchiste* peers were by this point using other political methods if they were still active. A group of AD militants that appeared in court in 1980 included a student, a plumber, a pharmacist, a type-setter and several bank employees. The group's initial ideology mixed the anarchism and Maoism of GARI and NAPAP. The *gauchiste* idea of self-defence was used to justify attacks. However, AD's ideology was in general a fairly standard Marxist interpretation of society. Like its *gauchiste* predecessors, AD condemned the 'colonial and imperialist' state, employers, French policies in Africa and real-estate speculation. Early attacks focused on symbols rather than human beings. AD wanted to use symbols in order to combat apathy and corruption. This was the era of the Bokassa diamond scandal, the PS-PCF failure to win the 1978 legislative elections, cynicism, Coluche and a sense of *ras le bol*.¹⁴ In retrospect, the period signalled the demise of *giscardisme*, which mixed economic liberalism, US-style political marketing and profound socio-cultural conformism.

At the time of AD's appearance, groups of politically frustrated youths who called themselves 'autonomists' were regularly attempting to provoke violence. They wanted to create an illusion of revolt and protest against the lack of serious political debate by both the left and the right. The autonomists expressed several attitudes, some of which fed AD's later division into two organizations. One group of autonomists sought to emulate foreign radicals, usually the Italian BR or West German RAF. Another focused on French traditions and justified violence by references to the wartime resistance movement and *gauchisme*. Both groups wanted to avoid the errors that they believed were inherent in the other's orientation. A third group of autonomists consisted of foreigners who were temporarily residing in France, but who belonged to other European radical organizations. Separate locations in Lyon and Paris furnished another source of AD's division. The Paris group, led by Rouillan and Nathalie Ménigon,¹⁵ attacked the Ministry of Cooperation on 18 March 1978. The Lyon group, led by André Olivier,¹⁶ machine-gunned CNPF headquarters on 1 May 1979. Believing that their predecessors had above all failed owing to poor organization, both groups carefully prepared their attacks to compensate for lack of support. They turned to robbery in order to finance operations. An August 1979 robbery netted 16 million francs from a tax collection office. The mix of Italian, Spanish, French and GARI activists who carried out the robbery illustrates the typical extreme-left blend of the late 1970s. Of course, robberies were not seen as a replacement for more strictly political acts. In September, AD bombed a Ministry of Labour annexe, SONACOTRA (*Société Nationale de Constructions pour les Travailleurs* – National Company of Buildings for Workers), the *Caisse professionnelle de prévoyance des salariés* (Workers' Compensation Board) and *Délégation*

régionale pour l'emploi d'Ile-de-France (Ile-de-France Regional Employment Commission). The façade of the Ministry of Labour was machine-gunned. All the attacks were designed to show that AD supported workers and immigrant labourers. These issues had also motivated the GP.

Police reaction to AD was firm and rapid. Schleicher was captured in February 1980. In the same month, the group attacked the *Direction régionale du travail et de la main-d'œuvre* (a government agency for immigrant workers), the *Immobilière de construction de Paris* (Paris Real Estate Construction), SEMIREP (*Société mixte de rénovation du quartier Plaisance* – offices for Paris-region real-estate), the *Direction de la surveillance du territoire* (DST – the French FBI) and the *Groupe d'intervention de la gendarmerie nationale* (GIGN – an elite SWAT squadron). Cooperation Minister Robert Galley's empty office was also machine-gunned. During this incident, several witnesses saw Ménigon calmly fit a new clip and continue firing after her automatic weapon jammed. Police subsequently rounded up 28 suspects, including several BR militants wanted in connection with Aldo Moro's murder. AD then attacked Toulouse police headquarters. A pattern of government response and AD retaliation set in after indictment of 15 group members by the *Cour de sûreté de l'Etat* in April. The Toulouse offices of Philips Data Systems were struck the next day. AD claimed that military secrets were hidden in company computers. The group rendered the equipment inoperable, at a cost of 2.5 million francs to Philips. *Clodo* targeted the Toulouse offices of CII Honeywell. Soon after, the city's Palais de Justice and the Ministry of Transport in Paris were hit. In striking out at law-enforcement agencies, political figures, real-estate speculation, and 'hi-tech' enterprises, AD's attacks exhibited considerable coherence. However, the group seemed to lose its strategic bearing when the University of Rennes and Orly-Ouest air terminal were bombed in June. The latter attack injured seven cleaning personnel who belonged to the class that AD claimed to be defending. Perhaps realizing these strikes were counter-productive, AD then turned to organizational matters. It seized passports, identity cards and materials used in preparing identity papers from a local police station in Paris.

Despite efforts to weld AD's disparate elements into a coherent unit, the entire period crashed to an end when police grabbed Ménigon and Rouillan in an ambush on 13 September 1980. The remaining AD members machine-gunned the *École militaire*, but were even more isolated and disorientated with their leaders under arrest. The Paris group undertook no acts of violence between September 1980 and December 1981. Although several incidents bore AD's 'signature', the group denied any link to them. The *Groupe Bakounine-Gdansk-Paris-Guatemala-Salvador* (GBGPS), for example, set 16 bombs between December 1981 and

February 1983.¹⁷ When François Mitterrand was elected to the presidency in May 1981, it seemed that any remaining motives for extreme-left violence were gone. A post-election amnesty pardoned AD prisoners who had not shed blood or committed felonies related to state security.¹⁸ Despite similar amnesties by Georges Pompidou in 1969 and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in 1974, the right-wing opposition said that this showed laxity on the part of the PS with regard to law and order and a willingness to endanger the lives of law-enforcement officers. Initially, terrorists who had attempted to kill police officers were not freed. Ménigon remained in prison because she had fired her pistol at officers during her arrest. The PS amnesty was a calculated risk. Its supporters later said that the amnesty separated AD from imprisoned autonomists and a budding prisoners' rights movement that could have given it a sociological base. The examples of Italian terrorist prisoners and AD's prison agitation in the late 1980s give this argument considerable weight (see below). *Juge d'instruction* (public prosecutor) Jean-Louis Bruguière noted that some AD members dropped out of the group after 1981. Rouillan moved to a squat in La Goutte d'Or, a Paris neighbourhood inhabited by Arab, African and other minority immigrants. The area's cheap housing contrasted with the gentrification and sky-rocketing rents found elsewhere in the city. In a building in which Rouillan then lived, police later found arms that had been used to attack the Israeli embassy. This indicated that AD leaders rejected left-wing reformism and wanted to rally a movement for revolutionary change. Rouillan and Ménigon seem to have considered establishing a legal community and an immigrant-rights organization, but then decided that the PS government was a greater threat to revolutionary ideals than a right-wing one. Like the members of the Lyon group, they decided that the PS-PCF had become social-democratic pro-American sell-outs.

The Paris organization slowly regrouped. It carried out a series of mischievous acts that recalled *gauchisme* and GARI. However, the assaults steadily became more menacing and indicated far-reaching plans. One of the first was the theft of PS secretary Lionel Jospin's car from a car park.¹⁹ After this, ten people were injured when militants attacked the Paris Intercontinental Hotel to demand the liberation of imprisoned activists. An *anti-goinfrerie* (anti-piggery) strike on the La Tour d'Argent restaurant vandalized the ground-floor entrance. Twenty people left behind a tract from 'Nous'. The group 'Badinter' (*Bombeurs anonymes pour la défense des incarcérés très excités par Robbery*)²⁰ then attacked the Toulouse Palais de Justice. Overtly terrorist tactics began to appear. 'Nous' set fire to a Paris *Comité de probation* (Probation Commission) annexe and vandalized a statue of Saint-Louis in Vincennes. 'Germain', in a *gauchiste* style of attack

assaulted a fine foods store and painted the stock.²¹ A *Comité unitaire de défense des prisonniers politiques* (Unitary Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners) invaded the editorial offices of the newspaper *Quotidien de Paris* and demanded that the morning edition include a page about the prison hunger strike. Fifty people occupied AFP (*Agence France Presse*) offices and released a news item that falsely reported the death of a hunger-striker. The *Comité Riposte à la répression en Algérie* (Algerian Repression Reprisal Committee) occupied *Le Monde* offices. On the day of Anwar Sadat's murder, AD supporters invaded the sets of the FR3 television station during a programme about him.

Despite mounting violence, the hunger strike tactics of AD prisoners were very effective. Ménigon was released from prison after 20 days without food.²² She was told to return to court for judgment, but disappeared into clandestine existence until 1987. After her release, Rouillan participated in the occupation of a vacant building along with the *Association des ouvriers-paysans du 18ème arrondissement* (Worker-Peasant Association of the 18th arrondissement), an organization representing neighbourhood squatters. Other AD militants moved into Turkish immigrant squats. The influence of GARI began to decline. Attacks became more deadly, made less and less social 'commentary', and began to threaten openly that violence would escalate if the group's demands were not met. A good example of this trend were the four butane-gas cartridge explosions that hit symbols of consumer luxury at the end of 1981. A Rolls Royce dealer, the expensive Train Bleu toy shop, the Bofinger brasserie on the Place de la Bastille, and a Burberrys clothing store all suffered damage.

Violent as they were, the incidents were only the beginning of the radicalization of the Paris group. The two organizations' different orientations became obvious in 1982, when they split into autonomous units. The Paris group emerged as ADi. It slowly forged its West European and Middle Eastern links into a functioning network. The Lyon wing, ADn, concentrated on the same types of targets as the original group, later adding others linked to apartheid. It generally had a more 'traditional' approach. In contrast, ADi began to see imperialism as the great danger to revolution and started an assassination campaign to combat 'world imperialism'. Its units were named after revolutionary 'celebrities' in the US, Ulster, the Middle East, West Germany and Italy. ADn occasionally referred to world imperialism but largely concentrated on France. For distinct reasons, both groups regarded the Mitterrand presidency as a travesty of French left-wing values. In true *gauchiste* fashion, ADn attacked Mitterrand for his role as a Fourth Republic interior minister. Increasingly disgusted with former *gauchistes* who became political and business leaders, ADi abandoned such criticism and portrayed Mitterrand as a US stooge.

As it developed its international network, ADi started to hit geo-political targets.

ADi and ADn were less vulnerable, but even more 'factional' after their 1982 reorganization. Units were modelled along the lines of resistance movement cells of five or six members who seldom met. Militants adopted cover lives and timed attacks to reflect constraints. AD leaders believed that French police were off-duty at weekends and scheduled actions accordingly. About 40 robberies during 1982–84 financed the operations of both sections and provided them with military training. The windows of their Renault 20s bristling with weapons, neither organization any longer hesitated to shoot or kill to defend itself. Heightened militancy was also displayed when both groups participated in FARL (*Fractions armées révolutionnaires libanaises* – Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Fractions) attacks on an Israeli defence ministry commercial mission and a well-known Jewish delicatessen in Paris, and in the murder of Israeli diplomat Youri Barsimantov. Police then discovered an arms depot²³ that led to the arrest of Joëlle Aubron and Mohand Hamami.²⁴ Some of the weapons had been used in FARL attacks²⁵ as well as to murder police informer Gabriel Chahine.²⁶ Chahine's murder foreshadowed later ADi violence and revealed a determination to avenge perceived wrongs. Realizing that the 1980 arrests resulted from disorganization and poor logistics, ADi moved to cut off loose ends. The first was Chahine, a former member of AD's *mouvance*²⁷ who became an informer for the *Renseignements généraux* (RG). Release from prison, a new political climate and re-evaluation of the struggle's 'needs' thus propelled an increasing 'professionalization'. In a crude parody of what it saw as 'legality', ADi henceforth executed death sentences.

A second phase in AD's ideological development was linked to changed international conditions. Concern over 'Americanization' was stimulated when US President Ronald Reagan attended the Versailles summit. In May 1982, AD sympathizers were found distributing a tract calling for 'armed demonstration' against his visit.²⁸ The tract was a taste of things to come. Opposition to US-led European 'homogenization' later became a major ADi theme. It motivated explosions that were set at the *Ecole américaine*, European World Bank headquarters and IMF offices by the *Unité combattante* Farid Benchellal. The assaults were prototypes for later ADi and ADn actions. Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon strongly affected AD and led to intensified cooperation with FARL. The latter set an explosion under a US embassy car in Paris that killed two police bomb specialists. The logistical involvement of AD was confirmed by captured arms and explosives. Ex-GARI militants Camillieri, Grosmaougin and Chibaud were then traced to a FARL bomb that had exploded under an

Israeli diplomatic vehicle and injured 51 people.²⁹ More AD–FARL connections were established when Oriach and Christian Gauzens³⁰ were arrested. Authorities seized 40 file-cards containing information about Jewish businesses in Paris. A letter by Oriach was discovered in which he specified his role in FARL attacks.³¹ Despite FARL ties, however, ADi and ADn were now divided. They split completely and permanently in August 1982. Olivier's group began independent operations. ADi articulated its new orientations into goals: a 'political military front'; opposition to NATO-controlled homogenization; links to foreign terrorists;³² BR-style assassinations; and ties to Third World revolution. Several members of Italian COLP joined ADi's new 'international'.³³

Action directe nationale

ADn launched its independent operations with a series of bloody robberies. It had committed many in the Lyon–Saint Etienne region between 1980 and 1982 under the name *Affiche rouge* (AR – Red Poster).³⁴ After 1982, AR was dropped in favour of the name 'AD'. AR and AD Paris had cooperated and coordinated actions, but never merged. Each had distinct views regarding the use of violence and choice of targets. Unlike ADi, ADn never turned to systematic assassination. Decentralized operations had suited both groups' belief that structures were a problem in themselves rather than a solution. The split confirmed Olivier in his position as the group's revolutionary guru. His relationship with Maxime Frérot³⁵ shows that he demanded and received devotion. His authoritarian personality dovetailed with Maoism and had also probably hampered co-operation with AD Paris.³⁶

More financially orientated than the Paris group, AR brutally treated anyone in the path of its bank robberies. The group's attitude directly transposed the GP view that police personnel and minor officials were 'enemies of the people'. Henri Delrieu was killed in the first AR bank robbery in October 1980. In March 1981, Frérot assaulted an employee in a Crédit Lyonnais bank. A policeman was killed in one Paris BNP robbery. A bank employee was stabbed in another that seized only 400,000 francs. In a Société Lyonnaise bank robbery, AR escaped with 40,000 francs but shot police brigadier Guy Hubert. In December 1981, Frérot attacked another Crédit Lyonnais employee. Still later, a BNP manager was stabbed. AR also engineered a bomb scare in a TGV (*train de grande vitesse* – bullet train). After ADn emerged, the pattern continued. In July 1982, Frérot shot a bank cashier in the temple. A bank client was shot in the stomach in July 1983. Police general Guy Delfosse was murdered by Olivier, Joëlle Crépet³⁷ and Frérot in a March 1984 BNP hold-up.³⁸ The

Lyon group claimed that its cruelty was revolutionary, that policemen and bank employees were allies of capitalism, and that financial operations and symbolic attacks were the same. After the split, the Lyon section continued to use the methods employed in 1979–82 (bombing public buildings in Paris and hold-ups in Lyon). In a 1982 robbery, it added political content by forcing a bank manager to display a list of demands to journalists. The Lyon group opposed 'Americanization', condemned the Versailles summit and invasion of Lebanon, and established FARL ties, but did not frame its actions in a comprehensive reinterpretation of conditions. AR's last acts were to spray gunfire at the Paris Bank of America in May 1982, threaten the American Legion branch with a bomb in June, and bomb three Lyon companies for their 'links to colonialism' in July.

ADn strove to show its anti-imperialist credentials in response to Israel's Lebanese invasion. The stance was not original at all, since the French extreme-left strongly criticized Israel after the Six-Day War. However, the intensity of ADn's techniques bears mention. A July 1982 attack hit two Israeli companies: Bank Leumi and Ganco. The *Unité combattante Marcel Rayman* machine-gunned an unoccupied Israeli diplomatic car and bombed the Discount Bank (a subsidiary of the former Rothschild *Européenne des Banques*) in August. *Unité combattante Lahouari-Farid Benchellal*³⁹ hit the Nemor company, a Jewish-owned business that it accused of trading with Israel. An explosion severely injured a passer-by at a firm that imported citrus fruits, Citrus GMBI of Israel. A demand for immediate Israeli withdrawal from Beirut was painted on a nearby wall. If this did not occur, ADn threatened to kill 'Zionist' financiers and propagandists. The offices of the extreme-right monthly *Minute* were then severely damaged by an explosion set to demonstrate ADn solidarity with the Palestinian people. The paper supported the Israeli invasion.

The anti-imperialist themes of 1982 were superseded by French military and foreign policy targets in 1983–84. The shift coincided with the PS 'move to the right' after a disastrous debut in state economic management in 1981–82. In August 1983, ADn attacked the offices of the PS and the defence ministry to protest against their African policy and demand withdrawal from Chad. The *Services techniques de construction navale* (Technical Services for Naval Construction) and *Centre documentation des carrières de la marine nationale* (National Navy Career Documentation Centre) were hit, as was the prestigious *Cercle militaire* officer club. In November, other attacks struck the *Maison diocésaine* and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. ADn explained the attacks as a response to collusion between religious institutions and military authorities. French imperialism was targeted by the ADn *Commando Hienghène* in December 1984, when it hit RPR and Elf-Aquitaine offices.⁴⁰ Elf-Aquitaine owned shares in *Société Le Nickel*,

the largest mining company in New Caledonia. In the meantime, the arrest of Emile Ballandras removed a seasoned militant and so prepared the ground for ADn's eventual dismemberment.⁴¹

In 1985, ADn targeted national organizations and firms linked to South Africa and racism. Powerful blasts rocked the Bank Leumi, *Office national de l'immigration* (ONI – the government immigration agency) and *Minute*. Others struck Paris IMF headquarters, *Télécommunications radioélectriques et téléphones* (TRT – Radio and Telephone Telecommunications) and the *Société Anonyme de Télécommunications* (SAT – Telecommunications Limited, specialists in infra-red equipment). The latter two firms had defence ministry contracts. On 4 September, powerful bombs hit companies linked to South Africa,⁴² injuring two people and causing serious material damage. The attack tried to integrate ADn into the anti-apartheid movement shortly after demonstrations against French investment in South Africa. At the same time, ADn began systematically to attack *lepenisme*, which had burst onto the political scene after the June 1984 European parliamentary elections. The group bombed the *Maison de la Radio*, the television network *Antenne-2* and the *Haute autorité de l'audio-visuel* in October 1985 to protest against radio and television appearances by Le Pen. The *Maison de la Radio* explosion created a one-metre hole in a concrete façade and destroyed three trucks. Six storeys of windows were shattered at *Antenne-2*. The *Haute autorité de l'audiovisuel*⁴³ explosion was a protest against Le Pen's appearance on a respected *Antenne-2* current affairs programme, *L'heure de vérité*. The attack by *Commando Ahmed-Moulay* damaged vehicles and broke windows over a 200-metre radius.⁴⁴ Apartheid was again targeted in October. Explosions hit the airline *Union des transports aériens* (UTA) and the shipping firm *Chargeurs Réunis*.⁴⁵ *Commando B. Moloise* declared that the attack was a protest against the hanging of a black activist in Pretoria.

In 1986–87, many observers expected yet more violence, but ADn was dismantled. The heavily-armed Olivier and Bernard Blanc⁴⁶ were arrested on 28 March 1986. About 150 kilograms of documents seized at the time publicly confirmed the separate existence of ADn. Crépet was arrested as she flushed a bundle of burnt papers down a lavatory in her apartment, where police discovered ADn's 'archives'.⁴⁷ The material led to the arrest of Pascale Turin,⁴⁸ Jean-Pierre Succab⁴⁹ and Alain Eket.⁵⁰ By 1986, investigators knew that ADn resembled a charismatic sect and had little connection to ADi. They also realized that it was more ideologically 'conventional'. ADn concentrated on the 'colonialist and imperialist French capitalist state'. When not robbing banks, it undertook symbolic attacks in the 1979–80 AD style. ADn regularly conducted political actions in Paris and armed hold-ups and murders in Lyon after 1982–83. Its national focus helped

police learn more about its operations: carefully prepared hold-ups; avoidance of telephone contact; episodic ties between members; and independent cells.

In a final blaze of defiance, ADn's remnants soon struck at South Africa-related targets. Bombs exploded at Thomson computer and *Air liquide* offices in July 1986.⁵¹ State-owned *Air Minerve* and the ONI were also bombed to protest against the expulsion of illegal immigrant workers by the Chirac government. *Air Minerve* flew 101 persons to Bamako, Mali on 18 October 1986. It was one of France's largest expulsions of illegal foreign workers to date. In November, explosions at Peugeot, Total petroleum company and the Pechiney-Ugine-Kuhlmann industrial group caused severe material damage. The bomb at Peugeot dug a 50-centimetre hole, broke windows and metallic door covers and destroyed building façades. *Commando Clarence Payi-Sipho Xulu*⁵² said the attack was a protest against French support for apartheid. The act coincided with a private visit to France by South African President Botha.

At large until November 1987, Frérot's determination and skill aroused serious concern. In April 1986, he murdered the Black and Decker France director, Kenneth Marston (a British national), in Lyon. He then bombed Lyon American Express and Control Data offices. Slogans nearby read: 'US go home'. Unsure of Frérot's intentions, authorities were shaken by a May explosion at a Paris police station. The perpetrator wrote 'Insecurity and death to cops'⁵³ on a wall. In July, Frérot and Gilbert Vecchi planted a 10-kilogram bomb in *Brigade de répression du banditisme* (BRB – Banditry Repression Brigade) offices in central Paris. It killed division inspector Marcel Basdevant, seriously wounded four policemen, and injured 20 other people.⁵⁴ Investigators quickly arrested persons known to assist and shelter Frérot.⁵⁵ A car-bomb killed Alain Peyrefitte's chauffeur in December. Police then arrested Vecchi, who said Frérot was living in squats in north Paris. Police believed that he was tracking Judge Bruguière. In January 1987, a security guard found a live grenade hanging on a nylon string in front of Bruguière's apartment door.⁵⁶ Frérot was finally captured in Lyon on 27 November 1987⁵⁷ as he tried to steal a Mobylette in an underground car park. Security guards later testified that they were only saved by the poor quality of his hand-gun. However, Frérot did not resemble a vicious killer and seemed to have been a terrorist despite fragility and self-contradiction. He had avoided capture for some 20 months by renting an apartment in central Lyon, relying on the help of female lovers, and getting money in bank robberies. He had a typed list of targets with him that included Fabius, Jospin, Guy Lux, Charles Pasqua, Maurice Papon, Bernard Pons and 100 other public figures. Beside Charles Hernu's name were noted his car licence plate numbers and

arrival and departure times from work. By Edgar Pisani's name were written down the stores he patronized, the timing of his apartment building hall lights and his car ignition key number. When Chirac visited Lyon, Frérot noted his helicopter landing time, the make-up of his escort and flight number. On 28 December 1987, Bruguière received a letter from 'AD' that wished him a 'Merry Christmas 1987'. It promised another Christmas in 1988 only if he stopped investigations.

Action directe internationale

GARI's influence predisposed ADi toward more systematic international links. Ties to the Belgian CCC were discovered after Ménigon was severely injured in a car accident in the company of its leader, Pierre Carette.⁵⁸ ADi–CCC ties came fully to light in 1984. The targets and style of 13 CCC attacks between 2 October and 11 December 1984 closely resembled those of ADi: Belgian political parties; an air base; Litton Business International;⁵⁹ and three foreign companies working for NATO. ADi denied any connection with the CCC but Belgian police assumed that it provided assistance. COLP member Rizzato's death on 14 October 1983 indicated yet more links to the Euro-terrorist network. The French government outlawed AD after a bloody FARL attack on the Rue des Rosiers. A serious hunt for ADi militants, arms and hide-outs began. In September 1982, explosives were found at a rural commune and about 20 AD militants were arrested. Militant Eric Moreau⁶⁰ barely escaped capture and Oriach, who came out on the ADi side of the split, was arrested in October.⁶¹ The rest of ADi committed no acts of terrorism between 18 August 1982 and August 1983, but several incidents occurred. Police officers Emile Gondry and Claude Caiola were shot on 31 May 1983 while attempting to check identity papers on the Avenue Trudaine. An area resident had unknowingly rented a nearby studio apartment to ADi members that was serving as a hide-out. Her testimony substantiated charges against Schleicher and Claude and Nicolas Halfen.⁶² A warrant of arrest was issued after Rouillan claimed responsibility for several attacks in an August 1982 interview with *Libération*. Another warrant was issued for him and Ménigon in connection with the July 1983 robbery of the 'Aldebert' jeweller.

NATO, the French Defence Ministry and military equipment suppliers were ADi's main targets in 1984. Its once eclectic methods and orientations were increasingly supplanted by calls for impassioned acts. In this way, the group resembled more and more other West European terrorists. This 'internationalization' and rapprochement to RAF methods and ideology continued. Inge Vielt, an important RAF figure in hiding in Paris, began to

help the group. In January 1984, the arms manufacturer Panhard-Lavessor was bombed in protest against French intervention in Chad.⁶³ In February, Paris police arrested Italian extreme-leftist Vincenzo Spano on the same day that the BR and FARL murdered American general Leamon Hunt, chief of the Sinai multinational force, in Rome. The assassination was a model for subsequent ADi attacks.⁶⁴ In July 1984, the *Centre de Recherches et de Constructions Navales* (Naval Construction and Research Centre) was bombed by *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*. The *Institut Atlantique des Affaires Internationales* (Atlantic Institute of International Affairs) and a building housing NATO pipeline management offices were hit by *Commando Ciro Rizzato*. In August, a bomb injured six passers-by at the European Space Agency just 48 hours before the tenth *Ariane* satellite was launched from Kourou, French Guiana. Police found the acronym AD and Rizzato's initials on site. Soon after, a 23-kilogram car-bomb was planted near the West European Union (WEU), an organization that ADi denounced as an imperialist tool. Ménigon telephoned neighbourhood police, the rescue service and AFP to warn of an impending explosion, but was not taken seriously. Police towed away the car for violating traffic laws and only located the bomb four days later. The explosives were part of an 800-kilogram stock stolen in Ecaussines in Belgium. In another strike at the military industry, Messier-Hispano-Bugatti computer services and the Marcel-Dassault company were bombed in October 1984. In December, an RAF attack on a West German NATO military college failed, but led investigators to another 24 kilograms of explosives from Ecaussines.⁶⁵ ADi's international ties evolved steadily into an alliance with the RAF.

The authorities kept up the pressure on ADi. Twice, Rouillan and Ménigon were nearly captured. On 4 February 1984, they barely eluded a police drag-net. In March, they took a Belgian police inspector hostage in order to escape arrest. The incident proved that they used Belgium as a refuge. This close call led to a major operational change. In March 1984, the four ADi leaders moved to a farm called *Le Gué Girault* in Vitry-aux-Loges near Orléans, which served as a base until their arrests in 1987. The contrast between the group's hide-out and its orientations is striking: while it broadened its international scope, ADi settled into everyday life in rural France. However, ADi militants already in prison used a new arena of action. Their prison activities, which soon helped to provoke a prisoners' rights movement, resembled those by other terrorist prisoners in France, West Germany and Italy. On 15 September 1984, Schleicher, Helyette Besse, Spano and the Halfen brothers went on hunger-strike to protest against isolation conditions and to demand visiting rights. They sparked a ripple of agitation that slowly spread through the facility. By

4 October, 635 prisoners were refusing to eat, in solidarity. Four of the five hunger-strikers stopped their protest on 24 October when a court allowed family visits. Claude Halfen refused to eat until 28 October to protest against the arrest of his girl-friend, Paula Jacques.

ADi activists not in prison steadily increased the level of international coordination. They were outraged that the PS was pursuing economic austerity, closer NATO ties, EC integration and Franco-German cooperation. On 15 January 1985, ADi and the RAF proclaimed a coordinated campaign against NATO and Franco-German cooperation. A communiqué declared that a 'West European guerrilla war' would compensate for the lack of 'authentic revolutionary strategy' in the West European 'imperialist centre'. The two groups believed that attacks on NATO structures, military bases, strategists, plans and propaganda constituted a 'proletarian political strategy in modified political circumstances'. Their call for a guerrilla struggle was justified by reference to Euro-missile installation, WEU renewal, the setting up of a French rapid action force, NATO arms cooperation, discussions on West German *force de frappe* participation and French reintegration into NATO. The two groups began a strategy of steadily paced and precisely targeted violence that was backed by an international coordinating structure. Although a focus on NATO and Americanization reflects traditional West German extreme-left pre-occupations, ADi was also reacting to the new domestic political consensus that groups like it traditionally abhorred. In this sense, its alliance was motivated by a coherent analysis of events. In 1985, France refused a Soviet demand to count its arsenal along with the West. Instead, France announced a new multi-warhead submarine that doubled its nuclear muscle. At the same time, a rapid action force came into service. The force made France the potential manager of a European theatre of war. ADi was clearly alarmed that the PS was diluting national independence. As such, French 'Euro-terrorism' was distinct from its populist, proletarian and Third World-oriented antecedents. It tried to integrate contemporary international and domestic tensions into a revolutionary perspective. Organizationally, the ADi-RAF alliance attempted to compensate for the capture of 18 ADi militants after 1984 and lack of support. The group turned to international links to stabilize operations in the face of 'globalization'.

Coordinated Euro-terrorism had direct results. A CCC bomb exploded at a Brussels US Army social centre and killed an American guard. On 1 May 1985, the CCC killed two firemen when it bombed FEB (*Fédération des entreprises belges* – Belgian Enterprise Federation) headquarters in Brussels.⁶⁶ In December, it attacked a NATO military oil pipeline control room in Belgium and the *Agence centre-Europe d'exploitation* (which managed Belgian, French, Luxembourg, Dutch and West German NATO pipe-

lines). AD prisoners again went on hunger-strike to support imprisoned West German terrorists. The Portuguese 'Popular Forces of April 25' fired mortars at three NATO frigates in Lisbon harbour. It also exploded bombs at a Portuguese air force base that destroyed the cars of West German military personnel. A communiqué demanded the base's dismantlement and the departure of the personnel. In France, the ADi *Commando Elisabeth-von-Dick* assassinated General René Audran on 25 January 1985.⁶⁷ The general was director of international affairs at the defence ministry, in charge of French arms sales, contract negotiations and international arms cooperation. In February, the RAF *Patrick O'Hara Commando*⁶⁸ killed Ernst Zimmerman, CEO of the military engine and turbine manufacturer *Motoren und Turbinen Union Muenchen GmbH*. In June, the ADi *Unité combattante Antonio Lo Musico*⁶⁹ fired shots at Henri Blandin, the army auditor-general and director of special investigations. In August, the ADi-RAF *George Jackson Commando* bombed a US air force base in Frankfurt-Rhin-Main. Two Americans were killed and 11 people were injured.⁷⁰

ADi's internationalist phase neither sparked wider support nor sheltered the group from firm legal response. In fact, police investigations moved abroad. In June 1985, Bruguière protested to Algeria that it was not cooperating in his search for Hamami and had not responded to an international warrant. He was soon allowed to pursue investigations in Algeria, but found no trace of Hamami. He learned that Algerian authorities had opened a file on Hamami after 1982, twice questioned him, and placed him under surveillance after French investigations established his role in the Avenue Trudaine shootings. Algeria promised legal action. Other international legal efforts led to arrests. RAF member Ingrid Barabass, spotted in Paris shortly before Audran's murder, was arrested in Frankfurt in July 1985. Belgian police arrested four CCC militants in December.⁷¹ They discovered that links between ADi and the CCC were personally maintained by Ménigon and Rouillan. Their finger-prints and photos were found in two Brussels apartments belonging to Carrette. Despite these ties, the CCC was not simply an adjunct of ADi. Investigations also spread to ADi's domestic support. Material at *Radio-Mouvance*, which openly supported the extreme-left, Third World movements and AD, was seized in July 1985.⁷² AD's 'financier', Meyer Azeroual, was arrested in October.

ADi reacted to these arrests with a further escalation of violence. The victory of the right-wing opposition in the March 1986 legislative elections provoked a new series of attacks. The *Commando Christos Kassimis*⁷³ fired shots at CNPF vice-president Guy Brana in April, seriously wounding his chauffeur. Eye-witnesses heard machine-gun fire followed by three isolated

shots. They said the assailants' weapons jammed. Brana was targeted because of his CNPF post, work as a Thomson naval armaments engineer, and membership of the CNRS (*Centre national de la recherche scientifique* – National Scientific Research Centre) industrial relations committee. Fifty people were questioned after the attack. Several were imprisoned after being found guilty of possessing arms and explosives. On 18 April, the public prosecutor began investigating Dr Jacques Darmon and Hamid Lallaoui.⁷⁴ Investigators discovered about 1,700,000 francs, five pistols, four revolvers, a rifle and ammunition in Darmon's apartment, but could not substantiate charges.⁷⁵ On 23 April 1986 the Chirac government tried to intimidate an alleged AD network. *Libération* offices were searched and journalist Gilles Millet (who had interviewed Rouillan in 1982) was detained. *VSD* (*Vendredi, Samedi, Dimanche*) journalist Marc Francelet was held without charge.

Despite the pressure, ADi kept up a steady pace of attacks and robberies. It stole 88 million francs from a Banque de France in Saint-Nazaire. In May 1986 *Commandos Christos Kassimis* and *José Kepa Crespo Gallende*⁷⁶ attacked Interpol headquarters in Paris. A security guard was wounded by machine-gun fire and a bomb seriously damaged the building exterior. A 12-kilogram bomb exploded outside OECD headquarters in July. Renault chief executive officer Georges Besse was murdered on 17 November 1986. He was shot by two women in front of his Montparnasse home. Besse had played a prominent role in France's nuclear industry, especially as head of the COGEMA nuclear company from 1976 to 1982. He accomplished a business turn-around at troubled Pechiney and was appointed Renault CEO by Prime Minister Laurent Fabius in January 1985. Besse helped stabilize a key public enterprise and rectify PS economic management in a crucial period. As a top administrator for ADi's hated reformist foes, he drew special wrath. *Commando Pierre-Overney* said his murder was part of the 'West European offensive'. ADi international connections and the Euro-terrorist phenomenon were then at their height. The group proclaimed solidarity with Libya after the US air strike on Tripoli and briefly appeared to be beginning independent operations in other European countries. On 9–10 April 1986, Air France offices in Lisbon were bombed while the French consul and the Institut Français received threats.

The other organizations in the Euro-terrorist networks were also busy. CCC prisoners⁷⁷ went on hunger-strike on 9 May. They protested against prison isolation and demanded regular meetings, uncensored correspondence and the right to wear civilian clothes. In June, two Americans and two Irish citizens were arrested in Le Havre as they tried to smuggle arms to Ireland. Arms destined for the Irish National Liberation Army

(INLA) were found in a camping vehicle that had been shipped from Los Angeles. ADi member Alain Pojolat was arrested in connection with the find. In Munich, Siemens co-director Karl-Heinz Beckerts and his chauffeur were killed by the RAF *Commando Maria Cagol* in July.⁷⁸ West German police feared that the RAF was beginning a protest campaign over the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. ETA or IRA involvement seemed probable due to the attack's sophistication. In October, the director of the West German foreign ministry policy branch, Gerald von Braummuelh, was killed in Bonn by the 'West European Revolutionary Front'. All of these incidents demonstrated hardened militancy and professional logistical preparation.

On 12 February 1987, a 26-page communiqué claimed responsibility for Besse's death and situated ADi at the heart of the 'Western' revolutionary struggle. Authorities and the public feared that ADi violence would amplify in 1987. However, Rouillan, Ménigon, Aubron and Georges Cipriani⁷⁹ were arrested at their farm and ADi was effectively decapitated. Along with arms, explosives, documents and money, police found plans to: (1) kidnap a leading industrialist who would have been held hostage in exchange for Schleicher; (2) attack a nuclear installation; and (3) assassinate public figures such as Robert Hersant, Alain Gomez (Thomson CEO), Jacques Amisonrouge (ex-third-in-command of IBM USA), Michel Droit or CNPF leaders.

Throughout their history, both sections of AD constantly sought support. Their failure to find support was largely because their political stance, while faithful to extreme-left traditions, was out of touch with contemporary realities. Unlike GARI and NAPAP, AD was formed after it was clear that the protest focus set by May 1968 and the *gauchistes* had shifted and that extra-parliamentarianism was generally in decline. Ignoring these facts, AD tried to secure the support it believed was latent in society. Eventually, the group split over disagreements as to how to proceed. The Versailles summit played a role in this evolution since the Paris group used it as an opportunity to specify its views on the US. After the split, both groups continued to look for an issue to muster support. This led ADi to coordinate actions with West German, Belgian and Italian organizations.⁸⁰ Ironically, the arrest of ADi had more political impact than did most of its actions since politicians used the group to show the toughness of their law and order policies.⁸¹

As shown above, AD and its progeny had legitimate roots in French extreme-leftism. Ideological motives played a cardinal role in the development of the organizations and their terrorist campaigns. However, the history of the group also demonstrates that the two organizations lost touch with the evolution of the populist traditions that nurtured them. Rather

than admitting that revolutionary tactics were inappropriate to conditions in the late 1970s and 1980s and engaging in a re-evaluation of goals and methods, the group embraced 'revolution' as an article of faith and brutally tried to force events to conform to its vision. Despite several dramatic incidents, the relatively effective dismantling of AD shows the folly of a revolutionary ideology that fails to examine soberly its potential support and proceeds in an elitist fashion. The following chapter, which focuses on the ideologies of the two groups, shows how they justified the strategy.

NOTES

1. *'Le régime franquiste et les mouvements complices.'*
2. Rouillan was born in 1952 near Spain. His father was a schoolteacher and youth sports inspector in Toulouse. When he was 17 years old, Rouillan met anti-Franco militant Puig Antich. After Antich's death, Rouillan left school. He was later expelled from the UK for distributing subversive literature and for possession of marijuana. Rouillan was also arrested in Barcelona by the *Guarda Civil*. He then helped form GARI and was arrested in December 1974. His idealism hardened into Marxist-Leninism in prison. He met his long-time lover and collaborator, Nathalie Ménigon, after being freed in May 1977, at the peak of Italian extreme-left terrorism that he admired. Arrested again in March 1978 in connection with the Tramoni murder, Rouillan was freed and then rearrested with Ménigon in July 1978. Both were again freed. In September 1980, Rouillan was arrested, only to be freed yet again in 1981. On 22 February 1987, he was arrested along with Aubron, Ménigon and Cipriani. In court testimony on 23 February 1988, psychiatrist Michel Dubec testified that Rouillan is very talkative, had a particularly happy childhood and became a terrorist from conviction, not unhappiness. Dubec said Rouillan created his life without romanticism and is convinced that his revolutionary communism has no personal dimension.
3. Known GARI members were Michel Camillieri, Olivier Chibaud, Floréal Cuadrado ('Floréal' is the eighth month in the French revolutionary calendar), Raymond Delgado, Charles Grosmaugin, Carlos Jauregui, Victor Manrique, Jean-Marc Rouillan, Mario Innes Torres, Robert Touati and Dimitri Saintes.
4. *'Charogne. . . Aujourd'hui, nous mitraillons ta voiture pour vous montrer, à toi et ton gouvernement, que nous avons des armes et sommes prêts à nous en servir.'*
5. *'Répression franquiste en Espagne.'*
6. Central courthouse.
7. State security court.
8. Born in 1952, Oriach was a French extreme-left 'star' and NAPAP leader. He was arrested on 13 May 1977 in possession of arms that had been used in attacks on the Bolivian ambassador, the Spanish military attaché and Tramoni. Oriach was sentenced to five years in prison and a one-year suspended sentence on 23 March 1978. Freed in March 1980, he was rearrested on 14 October 1981. Again arrested in October 1982, he attacked secretary of state Joseph Franceschi during his trial, calling him a 'rat' and a 'Nazi'. He was sentenced to six years in prison, but this was reduced to one year on appeal. On 30 June 1983, he received a five-year sentence. In October 1985, he argued in a court of appeal that he should be freed under the provisions of the 1981 amnesty. Throughout, he publicly sympathized with AD but denied membership. On 13 February 1986, the court freed Oriach. The judges said that his role in AD actions was unclear although he had transported arms that they and others had used.
9. Lapeyre is a former NAPAP member arrested while trying to sabotage West German railway offices. He was amnestied in 1981. Police believed Lapeyre was involved in the Avenue Trudaine shooting (see below). He fled to Belgium.

10. Schleicher was born into a well-to-do family on 31 May 1957. His father was a CFDT national secretary. His mother directed an institute for handicapped children. His sisters married engineers. Secretive, taciturn and obsessed with clandestine life, Schleicher none the less got on well with his family. In 1984, a court psychologist stated that Schleicher had yearned for affection at home and thought others received more attention. He never worked, failed an internship and attempted suicide with barbiturates in 1974. In 1977, he joined NAPAP. Sentenced to three years in prison in February 1980, he was charged with armed robbery, murder, voluntary homicide, illegally possessing arms and associating with known criminals. Schleicher was imprisoned in Fresnes. He had a leading role in the Avenue Trudaine shooting and Avenue de Villiers robbery. In August 1984, he took credit for the European Space Agency attack from prison.
11. See above, Ch.3.
12. 'Committee to liquidate or hijack computers' (the abbreviation is a slang term for a hobo), 'Young Mole', 'Nutteracker' and 'Fanatical Sheep'.
13. See below; the names gradually became less poetic.
14. Literally, 'being completely fed up'.
15. Ménigon was born into a working-class family in Enghien-les Bains in 1957. Her father was head of a work yard and often absent. Her mother died from cancer in 1975 after five years of suffering. Ménigon abandoned school after obtaining a technical diploma and became a cashier in a Barbès sweet shop. She also worked for three years in a BNP branch, where she was described as serious and hard-working. By 1978, she adopted a provocative and sarcastic attitude that in France is associated with a *paumé* (drop-out). She and several *autonomes* were then expelled from the CFDT. She joined a review called *Camarades* that was inspired by the Italian ultra-left. Active in all phases of AD, Ménigon was arrested and released a number of times. She ferociously fired her Colt .45 at police during her arrest in September 1980. She and Joëlle Aubron murdered Georges Besse. On 22 February 1987, she was arrested with Rouillan, Cipriani and Aubron.
16. Olivier, born on 16 March 1943, led Lyon-based ADn. A *soixante-huitard* who turned Maoist in the 1970s, Olivier taught modern literature at Lyon's *Lycée Tchecoslovaque*. He is described as dogmatic and authoritarian by people who knew him through Maoist groups, RAF support committees and *Libération* Lyon. Olivier joined *Changer l'école*, a group that promoted experimental pedagogy. In 1971-72, he joined several Maoist groups but was tainted by his supposed sympathy with *Algérie française* and the extreme-right in student days. Olivier organized Maoist 'popular vacations' for immigrant families in summer 1972 but was accused of trying to impose his views. His 'revolutionary' teaching led to a suspension, at first with pay, then without. After a former pupil revealed the layout of a tank depot to him in 1976, Olivier was imprisoned by the *Cour de sûreté de l'Etat*. He met GARI members, including Rouillan, in prison. After release, he shared an apartment with Rouillan and Ménigon. He kept NAPAP and GARI in touch. He was nicknamed '*Raymond la science*'.
17. See Appendix 4.1: *Groupe Bakounine-Gdansk-Paris-Guatemala-Salvador*.
18. On 15 July 1981, Schleicher was released. On 5 August Rouillan was freed.
19. Jospin is a former Trotskyist who became a leading PS minister. He is the type of PS politician that AD saw as particularly treacherous. Even Jospin's ostensible allies use his past against him. In *Edipe à Rennes*, published after the 1990 PS congress, a Fabius supporter said Jospin '*traverse la scène politique à longues enjambées brutales. Un menton à Mussolini et des grimaces de tribun lui ont sculpté une image de dureté et, derrière ses lunettes, brille une ambition qui cavale à toute allure*' (*Globe*, No.46 (April 1990), p.34).
20. 'Anonymous bombers for the defence of prisoners very excited by Robbery.' The acronym plays on the name of ex-minister of justice Robert Badinter, who abolished the death penalty and advocated prison reform.
21. PCF youth organizations still stage protests against consumerism.
22. French and foreign terrorist prisoners have long used hunger-strikes to back up their demands, get attention and embarrass a government that is sensitive to human rights criticism. See below, Appendix 4.3: *Action directe* Trials and Imprisonment.
23. It contained six sub-machine guns, three large revolvers, seven automatic pistols, two anti-riot rifles, one grenade, a bullet-proof vest, a stolen motorcycle and forged identity cards.

24. Aubron, then 33 years old, was the 'girl next door' turned terrorist. The media presented her as the 'lost child' of the Neuilly bourgeoisie. Nude photos of her published in *Paris Match* were taken out of print by court order. After her 9 April 1982 arrest, she was sentenced to four years' imprisonment for concealing arms. She married Schleicher in prison and was freed on 24 January 1984. On 17 November 1986, she assassinated Besse along with Ménigon. Considered a hard-liner, she was arrested on 22 February 1987 near Orléans with Rouillan, Cipriani and Ménigon. Hamami, then 27 years old, is an Algerian national born in Voiron (Isère). His family fought on the nationalist side in the Algerian war. His uncle was then second-in-command of the Algerian secret service. Hamami is considered 'second generation' since he joined AD in the 1980s. He is suspected of hold-ups in Angers, Toulouse and Grenoble. A former Maoist, he was arrested in 1980 along with three Italian *Prima Linea* members. Known to belong to AD, he was none the less amnestied. The government intended to pursue hold-up charges. Hamami was convicted in April 1980. After a hunger-strike, he was released for medical care in October 1981. Questioned on 9 April 1982 with Aubron, Hamami was released after she pretended that they were lovers and he knew nothing. He took part in the Avenue Trudaine shooting and apparently fled to Lebanon or Algeria.
25. One gun had been used in the FARL attack on the Israeli commercial mission. *Le Monde*, 25 February 1987.
26. Chahine, an Egyptian-born Lebanese painter, was killed by Schleicher on 13 March 1982.
27. The term *mouvance* means 'sphere of influence'. It was often used to describe small groups associated with AD. Unlike '*mouvement*', *mouvance* refers to attitudes or sets of ideas. The *mouvance* did not provide concrete support for AD.
28. A Grenoble printing house called the *Encre sympathique* and the *Boulangerie*, a Montrouge (suburban Paris) book shop, were named in the tracts. A search of their premises led to the arrests.
29. Camillieri and Grosmanin received five-year prison terms and 18-month suspended sentences. Chibaud got an eight-month suspended sentence.
30. An industrial designer and friend of Rouillan, Gauzens was charged with theft, receiving stolen goods and passing false cheques. Released, he was rearrested in May 1984. In January 1985 he was sentenced to two years in prison for possessing arms.
31. Rue de la Beaume, *Minute*, Avenue La Bourdonnais and the Lycée Carnot.
32. Such as Italian *Prima linea* and COLP (*Communistes organisés pour la libération du prolétariat*), Belgian CCC (*Cellules communistes combattantes* – Fighting Communist Cells) and West German RAF.
33. COLP member Rizzato was killed in a 14 October 1982 robbery.
34. *L'Affiche rouge* was an international communist resistance cell slaughtered by the Nazis on 21 February 1944 and immortalized in a Louis Aragon poem. Its members included Armenian activist Missak Manouchian, Marcel Rayman, Thomas Elek, Mendel Langer and 20 others of various nationalities. ADn named one of its attack units the *Unité combattante Marcel Rayman*.
35. Frérot was Olivier's second-in-command. From 1986 until his arrest on 27 November 1987, he was France's most wanted criminal. The son of a small industrialist from the Jura region, Frérot broke off family ties in 1971, left school, started working in a factory, and veered into fanaticism. In a letter to Olivier, he foresaw sacrificing himself to his 'master'. He enrolled in a parachute regiment to learn about explosives. His superiors described him as a very good soldier, athletic, disciplined and interested in combat and explosive techniques. In ADn, Frérot was an omnipresent man of action who offset the weakness of others. Described as a cold-blooded killer, he was in fact tortured by self-doubt.
36. See *Le Monde*, 16 May 1989, and *Le Figaro*, 16 May 1989.
37. Twenty-nine-year-old Crépet was Olivier's lover. She came from a working-class family in Montbrison (Loire) and loved motorcycles. She 'neutralized' clients during robberies.
38. *Le Monde*, 13 June 1986.
39. French extreme-left militant Lahouari Farid Benchellal was found dead in a Helsinki police station cell on 10 January 1982. The name was later used by ADi (July 1984).
40. Hienghène is a New Caledonian village close to the site where 10 FLNKS activists were killed on 5 December 1983. The dead included two brothers of the Kanak provisional

- president, Jean-Marie Tjibaou.
41. Born in 1949 in Crest (Drôme) into a relatively well-off family, Ballandras attended the *École des arts et métiers*. In 1971, he decided not to become an engineer, working instead as a skilled worker at CGE-Alsthom. As a *Gauche prolétarienne* militant, he met Olivier and Frérot in the early 1970s. He participated in most AR-ADn robberies. He had already left the group when arrested in a robbery-hostage incident on 10 October 1984. Condemned to 12 years, Ballandras described himself as a 'professional revolutionary' without reference to AD. He is believed to have participated in the shooting of Brigadier Guy Hubert on 3 November 1981.
 42. The companies were: ATIC (*Association technique de l'importation charbonnière*), Aluminium-Pechiney, Renault and Spie-Batignolles. ATIC imports South African coal. Of the 16.7 million tons of coal then imported to France from outside the EEC, 5.6 million tons (35 per cent) came from South Africa. The company director is a former PS mayor of Grenoble, Hubert Dubedout. Aluminium-Pechiney had no South African industrial installations, but imported high-quality magnesium and vanadium. Renault sold about 10,000 vehicles per year in South Africa. Spie-Batignolles was active in 15 African countries, but not South Africa. Company teams abandoned their work at the Koeberg nuclear plant in 1982.
 43. The French equivalent of the CRTC.
 44. Moulay was tortured by water and electricity and shot at his Algiers home on 3 March 1957. His son charged that Le Pen had participated, in *Libération*, 20 March 1985.
 45. UTA ran a Paris-Pretoria air link. *Chargeurs-Réunis* imported South African coal.
 46. Twenty-six-year-old Blanc came from a modest family in the Loire. Described as a well-balanced, athletic and non-political adolescent, he studied psychology at university. In 1981, he met Olivier and became an AD member. On 1 August 1985, police arrested Blanc changing the lock of a garage containing a stolen car. Despite his age (25), they believed he was a juvenile delinquent.
 47. The material included: arms; telephone conversation transcripts; suitcases stuffed with documents; press clippings of targets (senior civil servants, police officials, judges and politicians); 3,000 Polaroid photos of public figures; detailed plans of public places (banks, restaurants, theatres); texts taking credit for 20 attacks; and a 30-page notebook known as Frérot's 'confessions'.
 48. Born in 1957, Turin was Frérot's lover. She studied architecture at university, met Frérot in 1979 and was introduced to Olivier. She supplied lodging, a place to store material, and recruited Jean-Pierre Succab.
 49. Guadeloupean Succab was more interested in soccer than class struggle, but gave ADn an 'anti-imperialist' flavour. He recruited West Indians Alain Eket and Jean-Charles Laporal. Succab was arrested in 1986 in Point-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.
 50. Eket was born in 1948 in Point-à-Pitre. A former Communist Party member, he was arrested in 1986 and charged with 'associating with known criminals'. In a raid on the *Agence nationale pour l'insertion et la promotion des travailleurs d'outre-mer*, Eket was supposed to read a text denouncing the deportation of youth from DOM-TOMs, but became muddled. Frérot then delivered a delirious tirade. Soon after, Eket left ADn.
 51. *Air liquide* was the leading global industrial gas producer with 400 factories in 55 countries. Its South African factory helped Pretoria to offset petroleum shortages. Both Thomson and *Air liquide* work for the French defence ministry. Thirty-six per cent of Thomson's production then had direct military application.
 52. Payi and Xulu were ANC members who were hanged on 9 September 1986 for murdering a police informer.
 53. 'Insécurité, mort aux flics.'
 54. The attack unit, *Commando Loïc Lefèvre*, was named after an unarmed young man shot on the Rue de la Victoire on 4 July 1986 by CRS Gilles Burgos. Burgos said he thought Lefèvre was reaching for a gun.
 55. One, Josette Augay, was Frérot's lover from 1979 to 1981. From a modest background, she was pushed into university by her parents. She studied sociology and became a teacher. A lukewarm militant who had trouble living a double life and attending sterile *bouffes-discussions*, she preferred to forge papers or listen to police radio.
 56. The grenade was easily dismantled. Frérot had only six minutes to set it.

57. See *Le Monde*, 29 Nov. and 12 Dec. 1987.
58. Carette was born on 21 September 1952 in Charleroi, Belgium. His mother was a civil servant and his father a public safety officer. A mediocre student except in morals and industrial arts, he studied fine arts, became a printer and published manifestos by various European terrorist groups. In 1975, Carette helped create an RAF prisoner support committee. In an interview with a journalist, he placed a pistol on a desk and declared that only terrorism was beneficial. In 1979, he was implicated in a plot against NATO Supreme Commander Alexander Haig. Arrested on 16 December 1985 in Namur, he is imprisoned in Brussels.
59. *Le Monde*, 'Un axe franco-belge', 15 Feb. 1985. No concrete evidence suggests that the Canadian group coordinated acts with its European counterpart. However, members of Direct Action were quite likely to have spent time in the same Paris squats that AD frequented in the late 1970s. Carette distributed a review called *Subversion* that referred favourably to the bombing of Toronto's Litton Industries by Canadian Direct Action.
60. The son of a police superintendent, Moreau was considered to be a hard-liner. He was first arrested in February 1979. Moreau was about to be questioned on 20 October 1982, but opened fire on police. He later wrote that police had tried to 'execute' him. Condemned *in absentia* to four years in prison in 1983, Moreau is believed to be hiding in Latin America.
61. ADi ransacked the *Musée de la Légion d'honneur* to pressure for his release in April 1983.
62. Claude Halfen was born in 1955, son of a war *résistant* whom he deeply admires. His father and maternal grandmother influenced his politicization. He was nicknamed 'Biberon' (bottle-fed) after his enthusiastic participation in May 1968. His ex-lover, Frédérique Germain, became a government witness. He had numerous affairs, most recently with Paula Jacques. He is in prison in Fresnes. Nicolas Halfen is Claude's younger brother. He stopped training as a *pâtissier* due to an allergy to flour (*Le Monde*, 5 Dec. 1986).
63. Panhard-Lavessor made the AML light machine-gun and VAB troop transport sent to Hissen Habre's government.
64. In November 1984, the 'Popular Forces of April 25' fired mortars at the US embassy in Lisbon, Portugal. On 9 December mortars hit a NATO command post in suburban Lisbon.
65. Also used to attack the WEU. See above.
66. Employers' associations are traditional extreme-left targets in France, Italy and Germany.
67. Von Dick was an extreme-left terrorist shot by Nuremberg police in May 1978.
68. O'Hara was an Irish terrorist who died in Belfast after a 61-day hunger-strike in 1981.
69. Lo Musico was a BR member killed by Italian police in 1977.
70. Black activist George Jackson was killed in a 1971 Soledad Prison, California riot.
71. The four were: Didier Chevolet, Pascale Vandergeerde, Bertrand Sassoie and Carette.
72. For a review of AD's activities in 1985, see *Le Monde*, 5-6 Jan. 1986.
73. Kassimis was shot through the head on 21 October 1977 by Athens police as he attempted to fire-bomb a German AEG-owned factory to protest against a visit by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.
74. Born in 1952, Darmon studied medicine and joined Maoist groups after the GP was banned. He participated in student street-fights against Zionist groups. He then joined the *autonomes* and RAF prisoner support groups, where he met Rouillan, Oriach and Italian militants. After AD appeared, he became inactive and opened an acupuncture clinic.
75. Christine Furbury and Philippe Gibault were charged following the same investigation.
76. José Crespo was a *Groupes révolutionnaires anti-fascistes du 1er octobre* (GRAPO) militant who died in a Madrid hospital in 1981 after a three-week hunger-strike.
77. Carette, Chevolet, Sassoie and Vandergeerde.
78. Maria Cagol, wife of BR founder Renato Curcio, was shot by police in a 1975 gun battle.
79. Cipriani was born in Tunis, Tunisia in 1952. He speaks German perfectly and looked after RAF links. Little is known about him.
80. After the arrests, Italian air force general Licio Giorgieri was shot by the *Union des communistes combattants* in an operation that resembled ADi strikes at the 'heart of the military-industrial complex'. Rouillan said Italy would be hit by a new BR generation that would follow the ADi-RAF example. On 2 September 1989, five BR members (Simonetta Giorgieri, Marcello Dell'Omo, Nicola Bortone, Carla Vendetti and Gino Giunti) were

arrested in Paris' twelfth *arrondissement*. Arms (a 7.65 pistol), munitions (500 cartridges of three different calibres), bullet-proof vests, documents (accounts and locating plans), tracts (signed jointly with the RAF for the Ruffilli murder and attempt to assassinate West German secretary of state for finance, Hans Tietmayer, in September 1988) and materials used to forge documents were seized. Police said the group, an 'international' branch called the Red Brigades Fighting Communist Party PCC (BR-PCC), opposes a less extreme 'national' one, the minority Union of Fighting Communists (UCC) from the old BR. Both wings emerged after an autumn 1984 schism developed out of arrests of BR members. The two disagreed over how to respond. The UCC was Leninist and 'militarist'. The PCC sought links with the RAF and ADi. The PCC tried to assassinate former Florence mayor Laundo Conti on 10 February 1986, attacked a postal truck in Rome (causing two deaths and netting ten million francs) in 1987, and assassinated Christian Democratic senator Roberto Ruffilli (aide to Italian Prime Minister Ciriaco de Mita) in April 1988. After about 30 arrests in Italy, France and Spain in 1988, police believed that the PCC was dismantled. A text claiming responsibility for the Rome robbery was found in one of the Paris apartments. The three men and two women arrested were recreating an 'executive committee' and 'action cell'. Carla Vendetti was an executive committee member. The arrests followed questioning of French resident Giuseppe Armant and Franco La Maestra, a militant arrested at the Swiss border. The PCC was preparing to target institutions rather than individuals. On 6 September 1989, the five were charged and Bruguière began an inquiry. Italian police considered the arrests very important since the group was a new, unknown BR generation (except for Giorgieri). Other arrests followed in Italy. A Jordanian member of the Abou Nidal gang and the Fatah Council, Hassan Khaled Thamer al-Birawi, was also caught.

81. On 25 February 1987, the group was charged with '*association de malfaiteurs en relation avec une entreprise individuelle ou collective ayant pour but de troubler l'ordre public par l'intimidation ou la terreur, infraction à la législation sur les armes, munitions et explosifs, falsification de documents administratifs et usage, recel de documents falsifiés ou volés*' ('association with known criminals in an individual or collective undertaking that aims to disturb public order by intimidation or terror, violation of legislation on arms, munitions and explosives, forgery and use of administrative documents or receipt of forged or stolen documents'). Tension mounted after police discovered explosives in a hide-out in the *Tour Montparnasse* on 18 March 1987. Prime Minister Chirac convened a nine-nation Western anti-terrorist 'summit'. RPR Secretary-general Jacques Toubon said the AD story showed how the PS was soft on terrorism and alleged that Besse and Audran would be alive if not for the 1981 amnesty. Mitterrand quipped that these statements were 'extremely thoughtless or extremely shameful', indicating that Toubon had a 'fascistic' mentality.

5 The Ideological Trajectory of *Action directe*: Radicalization and Violent Protest

*'Vive le terrorisme! Enfin la France s'éclate!'*¹¹

The following discussion of AD's ideology specifies the links between AD's ideology, French political culture and the revolutionary tradition. First, it elucidates how the revolutionary origins of the host culture were interpreted by the group, outlines why AD viewed violence as a logical course of action, and shows how the organization evaluated changes to and within French political regimes. Second, the discussion traces the evolution of AD's ideology and demonstrates how it influenced the original group's split into two organizations. The evolution, which covered three phases (1979–81, 1982–84 and 1985–87), reveals the national and international foci that underlay AD actions. The split was certainly influenced by personalities and geographic location, but received crucial impetus from belief systems. Third, the examination provides a foundation from which to analyse the link between ideologies and the actions of both groups. In ADi's case, the motives underlying its decision to use assassination will be specified. ADn, as will be shown, remained ideologically closer to French extreme-left precedents. The analysis shows that both organizations had rational motives, but ultimately misjudged contemporary French political realities.

Both sections of AD advocated the revolutionary transformation of French society. However, conditions imbued this principle with a particular character. An examination of approximately 200 pages of AD documents shows that its attempt to mobilize a social group that would embody revolutionary transformation became a 'search for a revolution'. The texts outline AD's purposes and notion of political power, and analyse French and international conditions. Although AD tried to justify violence as an extension of French left-wing traditions, its ideology demonstrates that the group was less revolutionary and more protest-orientated than initial

impressions suggest. In addition, both groups had motives that evolved over time. ADi's ideological evolution culminated in an assassination campaign. It was never a strong movement that threatened the establishment, only a marginal organization that sought a social 'carrier'. ADn decided that violence should embody the radical traditions of the extreme left, but often veered into brutality. Desperate for support, both groups ignored the fact that violence 'should not take the place of the political purpose, nor obliterate it'.² ADi hoped that terrorist tactics would attract a group willing to engage in revolutionary guerrilla warfare. However, its increasingly deadly campaign juxtaposed a growing political consensus. The conditions for guerrilla war did not exist and the Fifth Republic further solidified under Mitterrand. As a result, ADi's violence came to express its fringe status more than a threat. The group physically menaced officials in government, international organizations and business, but neither institutions nor the regime itself. The disjunction between AD's analysis and conditions was rooted in nostalgia and political romanticism. AD, even more than its *gauchiste* predecessors, devoted its energies to a class that was uninterested in revolution.

In 1979, *gauchisme* and May 1968 still appealed to some groups. The original AD recognized this and tried to attract support from the autonomists, which it hoped would be a new revolutionary class.³ Having observed the development of an Italian autonomist movement, AD's leaders thought there was potential to use fringe groups to radicalize the political situation. They believed that the Italian move toward a left-right consensus (the 'historic compromise') was analogous to the PS-PCF union of the left and that autonomists might similarly radicalize French politics. AD set up a loose network structure that emulated the GP. The network was also designed to attract autonomist support by expressing socio-economic discontent and protesting left-right collusion. French political circumstances in the late 1970s facilitated ideological and organizational heterogeneity. AD believed that violent groups like the autonomists could be springboards for revolution in a changing situation. The view was again influenced by Italian groups that concentrated on

the experience of proletarian youth associations. These associations were communes set up by squatters in certain neighbourhoods of big cities; young proletarians thus organized territorially and experimented with forms of collective-life-in-transformation.⁴

On the basis of analogies it drew between France in 1979 and Italy in 1976-77, AD tried to 'accelerate' political events. However, a desire for acceleration blinded AD to several factors. Primarily, the group ignored

the fact that Italian autonomists and the BR had contradictory tactics. In particular, the Italian autonomists

refused to see the military organization as an autonomous political body or as an 'armed party'. The strength of the Red Brigades is thus directly proportional to the weakness of the Movement . . . terrorism created a situation of crisis for the revolutionary movement, or rather inserted itself into a pre-existing crisis of the Movement.⁵

More seriously, AD misjudged French conditions. It interpreted the cynicism of the late 1970s as grounds for a revolutionary movement. The error can be explained by a myopic concentration on Italy, the RAF, Third World liberation movements, May 1968⁶ and Rouillan's personal experience.

AD's 1979-81 ideology stands out from the more elaborate justifications for violence that ADi later developed. To attract the autonomists, AD focused on the daily difficulties of working-class youth and immigrants: unemployment, rising prices and scarce housing.⁷ High-technology was added to its list of concerns in 1980. After attacking CII-Honeywell officers, *Clodo* said computers are 'the favoured tool of people who dominate. They serve to exploit, to document, to control and to punish.'⁸ AD explained domination as the logical consequence of the French imperialist system. The view was repeated after DST offices were bombed in 1980: 'After Kolwezi, Gafsa, Djibouti, etc., Barbès sends you greetings. Signed: Action directe.'⁹ The message linked domestic conditions to foreign policy in Zaïre, Djibouti and Tunisia.¹⁰ It attacked Giscard d'Estaing's African policy, an area that is a traditional presidential prerogative. The close link AD drew between internal and external policies was expressed in reference to 'Barbès', a colloquial manner to refer to a poor Paris neighbourhood with large Arab and African communities, Barbès-Rochechouart. AD believed that domestic problems and neo-colonial ties were part of the imperialist system of domination. A *bonjour* from Barbès was intended to remind the government that real human problems and significant unrest existed in its Parisian backyard.

'*Communiqué numéro 7*',¹¹ released after an attack on the Ministry of Cooperation, had the same focus. The ministry administers French government programmes in Africa. The text again cited Gafsa and Djibouti and added Djamena (Chad) and Bangui (Central African Republic) to argue that French army presence in these cities ensured 'the prosperity of the neo-colonialist merchandise and labour trade'.¹² Decrying the 'civilizing mission' that underlies African policy, AD charged that 'the entire French policy stinks'.¹³ It described the civilizing process as the work of French police, stating that all 'those who bludgeon have the same face' at home

and abroad.¹⁴ Like the GP, AD called for revolutionary acts everywhere against the French state ('the slave-trading state') in order to assist a global struggle against the French imperialist system: 'to struggle against French imperialist policy in Africa is also to struggle against the entire range of French state institutions'.¹⁵

'*Communiqué No. 2*'¹⁶ was a more radical text that was released as more violent AD attacks occurred. The text negatively evaluated the new PS government. Referring to the jail conditions of Gilles Collomb, an AD member held in isolation,¹⁷ AD said that 'the Socialist state pretends to have ended arbitrary treatment, but imposes isolation on Gilles because he claims political prisoner status'.¹⁸ The group said claiming political prisoner status was 'refusing consensus'.¹⁹ The point of view reappeared in later communiqués. AD charged that the 'annihilation of imprisoned proletarians is a fact in today's social democratic state'²⁰ and made the administration indistinguishable from previous right-wing ones. The charges expressed AD's conviction that the PS government was impeding and discrediting radical social ideals. Combating the PS subsequently became central to AD's evolution, including the Lyon-Paris split. The two wings disagreed over the implications of a PS administration. Both were profoundly suspicious of the parliamentary left, as the revolutionary left has been since the Third Republic.²¹ The distrust was based on a belief that political reform is 'false' and that installing a regime based on popular sovereignty is the only 'authentically' revolutionary course of action. The Paris group believed the PS was betraying the working class much as the left- and right-wing establishments had always abandoned the 'people'. The divergent interpretations were fundamental to the 1982 split.

The ideology of Action directe nationale

ADn was less ideological and more dangerous to the general public than ADi. Its actions included many robberies. ADn favoured an issue-based approach over a comprehensive analysis of conditions. Between 1982 and 1987, ADn concentrated on issues such as decolonization, the Middle East conflict, French militarism and imperialism, and racism. The orientation continued the original AD ideological trajectory. AR²² tracts supported decolonization: 'we use arms to expropriate capital for the benefit of struggles for total decolonization'.²³ AR demanded independence for French overseas territories and an end to paternalistic African ties: 'all of France demands liberty and independence for the Polish people. What about French overseas departments and territories and African countries?'²⁴ ADn later opposed the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Its support of the Palestinians was mixed with anti-Semitism. ADn demanded an 'immediate

and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli fascists', and said that 'if the Palestinians are driven from Beirut, we will kill Zionist financiers and propagandists'.²⁵ Opposition to Israel and the US motivated attacks on Israeli, American, Jewish and extreme-right targets. At the same time, ADn attacked PS offices and the Ministry of Defence to show opposition to French colonialism and the military. These targets were regular and became ADn's 'signature'. '*Indochine, Algérie, ... Tchad?*' linked French intervention in Chad to post-1945 South-east Asian and North African colonial wars and asked whether French colonialist troops were heading for a third defeat.²⁶ ADn's demand for a withdrawal from Chad implicitly attacked Mitterrand's African policy. ADn believed he was US manipulated and a traitor to left-wing principles: 'after his Cancun farce, his godfather-style African tours, the little dictator from the Elysée has struck once more. Throwing a boomerang is a dangerous game.'²⁷

Attacks on Mitterrand continued in '*D'Oum-Chalouba au Chofl'aviation française poursuit son entreprise criminelle*',²⁸ which criticized French policy in Lebanon: 'as in all French-speaking colonies, the French army sets itself up in a foreign country and dares to invoke legitimate defence! The Nazis used the same arguments when they occupied France and struck out at anti-fascists of all nationalities.'²⁹ The text charged that French, American and Israeli imperialism was identical. France's security, police and military forces were amalgamated into a repressive system in which the state 'hunts down immigrant workers in France and conducts dirty wars thousands of kilometres away from Paris'.³⁰ Unlike foreign intervention, AD charged, domestic repression was 'clean'. Like the BR, ADn hoped that terrorism would provoke the state into revealing its authentic character. The group called for a halt to racism and deportation of immigrant workers, withdrawal of French troops from Chad and Lebanon, and the liberation of all revolutionaries from French jails.³¹ The focus on racism and immigrant workers accompanied the rise of FN support that culminated in its June 1984 European election breakthrough.

In 1983, '*Opprimés de tous les pays: Get up, stand up!*'³² explicitly linked Mitterrand to the military:

Tonton (Mitterrand) is there. And he knows how to sing a song of promises. Do you remember what followed the Cancun speech? – French-American-Zionist preparation of the Lebanese invasion – the Versailles summit comedy to cover up the start of the invasion – the French army landing in Beirut – military invasion of Chad.³³

Beyond characterizing all imperialists as similar, ADn drew little systematic connection between French policy and international structures. It viewed France as a colonial power that obsessively clung to the vestiges

of its past glory. Mitterrand's effort to rearticulate foreign policy was simply seen as evidence of his 'sell-out' to the US. The French state was seen as the same vehicle that had served wartime collaborators. ADn opposition to militarism extended to religious institutions, perhaps because of their high profile under Vichy. After bombing Paris diocesan offices and a Seventh-Day Adventist church, ADn declared: 'war-mongering lovers of crusades calm down! No to Pershing and other "cruise" missiles. If the Catholic Church wants bombs, it'll get them! . . .'³⁴ This attempt to join the then widespread protests against the installation of Euro-missiles was particularly pathetic since it had no social basis. France was the only West European country in which an anti-Euro-missile movement did not develop.

ADn opposition to colonialism was expressed in '*Nouvelle-Calédonie Guerre de classes*'. The text declared support for the Kanak³⁵ fight against the exploitation and spoliation of their land by French settlers. It contrasted the Kanak struggle with the domestic opposition to granting immigrants municipal voting rights. ADn noted that French settlers in New Caledonia participated in an independence referendum and tend to vote RPR and FN:

Racist mayors, in the name of a mysterious 'tolerance threshold' (!!), declare there are too many immigrant workers . . . coloured ones . . . in their districts. What can be said about the situation in New Caledonia, where 50,000 whites are installed without ever even having asked for at least a RESIDENCY PERMIT from the 60,000 Kanaks?³⁶

ADn used the controversy to denounce Mitterrand again, 'the little dictator who is sick of Chad',³⁷ and the PS. Drawing a parallel between its support of the Kanaks and the 'fellow-traveller'³⁸ supporters of Algeria, ADn said that 'some French gave their support to the Algerian FLN. We give ours to anti-colonial and anti-capitalist popular struggles.'³⁹ ADn argued that French colonialism was the work of a political and business elite dominated by Jews, characterizing the Elf-Aquitaine-owned SLN mining company as 'a former property of the Rothschild mafia'.⁴⁰ Although anti-Semitism motivated many of its acts, ADn believed that supporting Third World peoples made it anti-racist. The text '*Conseils donnés d'un point de vue de classe aux racistes de France et d'ailleurs: Touche pas à mon pote travailleur immigré, à mon pote kanak, tchadien, libanais, palestinien, etc . . .*'⁴¹ claimed that government policy towards Lebanon and South Africa resembled a domestic system based on:

- judicial cover-up of racist crimes by the police in France;
- firing and expulsion of many immigrant workers;

- the racist policy of DUFOIX (head of the ONI) and the ONI (family reunification more precarious than ever, graft between Renault and the ONI regarding the nationality of African workers and therefore throwing into question assistance for repatriation, etc . . .);
- opening French television studios, under police protection, to LE PEN, the Nazi, torturer of Algerians;
- meetings held by this racist trash, once again under police protection.⁴²

ADn said Mitterrand's role in 'the great butchery in Algeria'⁴³ could only be redeemed by revolutionary praxis and banning the FN. His implicit racism was allegedly expressed by the ONI's 'racist policy towards immigrant workers', French backing for Israel's 'Zionist exactions against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples', and the role of *Minute* as 'one of the most virulent points of transmission of racist (Zionist, colonialist, anti-immigrant) propaganda in France'.⁴⁴ '*Machoro-Mandela: même combat*'⁴⁵ went further and paralleled the above to apartheid. ADn argued that by means of common policies:

The French and South African states are ready to do anything to hold on to their domination over the peoples they exploit. They are armed states. The French imperialist state maintains tens of thousands of military personnel on a war-footing at many points around the world.⁴⁶

The group said French intervention in Chad and Lebanon was the same as the South African campaigns in Angola and Mozambique. It also compared housing conditions in France to those in South Africa:

Racial and class contempt determine the conditions for daily survival. In France: overcrowded slums in the cities, and Sonacotra hostel-barracks and dormitory towns in the suburbs serve as precarious housing for immigrant workers. In South Africa, there are townships for black workers. The principle is identical. It is the principle of the GHETTO.⁴⁷

In this light, ADn explained its violence as a response to growing French-South African ties 'following the rise to power of French social democracy'.⁴⁸ It said the links exemplified how the PS betrayed the left. After itemizing French involvement in the South African diamond, gold, banking, car, nuclear, military and uranium industries, ADn concluded that 'the ghetto blacks finished off by Pretoria begin to die in Parisian ministries'.⁴⁹

Anti-racism was also used to justify opposition to *lepenisme* and assaults on the *Maison de la Radio* and *Antenne 2*. 'Ni radio, ni télé pour Le Pen'⁵⁰ recalled that, despite an ADn demand for a ban on the FN, the latter was still legal and was now invited onto radio and television.⁵¹ ADn said Le Pen's function in French politics was to: (1) measure how far 'war' against workers, immigrants and the colonized could go; (2) divide workers between racists and non-racists; and (3) be a sacrificial lamb⁵² preaching the French army's warlike values. ADn said Le Pen's media appearances legitimated and aided racism: 'the death of young immigrants in France is the result of what is said and what is done'.⁵³ Attacks on the media continued after publication of a *Libération* interview with the son of a man Le Pen probably tortured to death in Algeria. '1957: R.A.S., 1985: R.A.S.' ('R.A.S.: Nothing to report.')⁵⁴ mocked military parlance to advance ADn's view that racists were killing and maiming as the PS tried to 'domesticate' Le Pen through media access. The view underlined differences between the two ADs. Focusing on Vichy and *pétainisme*, ADn argued that Le Pen was a counter-revolutionary who exemplified the French establishment's reactionary character. ADi opposed Le Pen, but argued that 'imperialist' projects conditioned domestic affairs.

Anti-racism also motivated an assault on *Chargeurs-Réunis* and UTA after black activist Benjamin Moloïse was hanged in Pretoria and Kanak activists Machoro and Nonaro were murdered in New Caledonia. ADn charged that the latter killings 'do not seem to be crimes for the social-democratic humanists since Badinter [PS justice minister at the time] covers them up by refusing to order an investigation'.⁵⁵ It claimed that violence against the companies modestly compensated for the pain that French capitalists inflicted on domestic, Kanak and South African workers. Similar anti-racist themes reappeared in '*Les capitalistes blancs fêtent leur liberté*',⁵⁶ which appeared after Mitterrand and Ronald Reagan jointly rededicated the Statue of Liberty in New York City. Deploing the fact that 'the Franco-American couple has a champagne toast with the blood of blacks from Pretoria or New York townships',⁵⁷ ADn said the ceremony only celebrated French subservience to the US and 'false' freedom:

Freedom for the Rambos who prepare class war: the NATO-Thomson agreement.

Freedom for the French capitalist state to assassinate the Chadian, Kanak, Caribbean, Corsican, Basque peoples thanks to the executioners in the G.I.G.N., G.A.L. and the army.

Freedom for 120 French enterprises and banks to collaborate with the fascist South African state.

Freedom for torturers in colonial wars.

Freedom for the fascist Le Pen and his spokespersons.

Freedom for the criminal Duvalier.

Freedom to return to the good old Vichy methods: informing and strengthening the police state, hunting down immigrants.

Freedom for bosses to lay off still more, always more.⁵⁸

Compounding 'false liberty' *cohabitation* confirmed that the PS had 'sold out'. ADn demanded tough measures against South Africa and the release of French political prisoners (that is, AD members) rather than a 'social democratic/RPR media comedy'.⁵⁹ '*Légitime défense*'⁶⁰ justified violence as a response to the increased authoritarianism that allegedly resulted from *cohabitation*. ADn substantiated its claim by citing police brutality towards minor offenders: 'in France, land of the white man's rights, we kill because people's features offend us'.⁶¹ Interior minister Charles Pasqua's tough anti-terrorist legislation was particularly decried. ADn lumped him, the PS and employers together as a unit that enforced bourgeois domination.

'On a pressé le citron, on peut jeter la peau'⁶² asked 'from which countries did our armies ask for visas in order to colonize and massacre in Indochina, Algeria and Madagascar?'⁶³ The text directly linked Mitterrand and the PS with the extreme right:

Our African and overseas department and territory Bantustans make up a considerable reserve of new slaves. Deported to the land of 'freedom'. Exploited by employers. Shot at on sight by the Le Pens. Thrown into detention camps already inaugurated by the fascist Mitterrand during the Algerian war.⁶⁴

'*L'apartheid ça commence en France*'⁶⁵ said again that violence responded to Franco-South African ties: 'Colonial Europe, built with black, yellow, Arab and Indian sweat and corpses, conceived its offspring in the seventeenth century: South Africa. The white capitalist interest in pillage and massacre is the same in Paris as in Pretoria'.⁶⁶

ADn compared France's colonial wars in Vietnam, Algeria and Madagascar to apartheid. It claimed that French presence in Africa and the Middle East was similar and that 'apartheid is only one face of fascism'.⁶⁷ French votes at the UN and investment in South Africa allegedly revealed the true nature of the PS. Mitterrand and Chirac maintained global links 'in memory of Pétain'.⁶⁸ ADn said that denying voting rights to immigrants, imposing work visas on foreigners, expelling 1,700 illegal aliens between September and November 1986, and giving visas to Angolan rebel Jonas Savimbi, Botha and Jean-Claude Duvalier made France no better than South Africa. Even worse, 'the media have supported white capitalist

crimes against humanity since the Indochinese wars'.⁶⁹ Throughout, ADn focused on French imperialism and its historical antecedents. The 'traditionalism' of its orientation is striking in comparison to the global perspective of ADi outlined below.

The ideology of Action directe internationale

'*Pour un projet communiste*' and '*Sur l'impérialisme américain*'⁷⁰ set out ADi's more far-reaching strategic and organizational orientations. The texts appeared just as ADi was aiding FARL attacks on Jewish and Zionist targets.⁷¹ '*Pour un projet communiste*' presented a comprehensive analysis of political conditions. The group said an ideological response was needed to counter 'the fantasies of hack journalism that is always eager for an "international plot" and some "kid from a good family who has turned out badly"'.⁷² ADi attempted to rearticulate a revolutionary stance in the context of a left-wing administration under a 'Gaullist' regime. It called the PS-PCF government 'socialist power mixed with a few Stalinists'.⁷³ '*Pour un projet communiste*' concentrated on three sets of issues: (1) revolutionary organization and unity; (2) imperialism, employment and housing, and government attitudes to capitalism; and (3) the conditions for fulfilling a communist project. The group moved issues such as neo-colonialism, unemployment and immigration into a global context. At the same time, ADi reiterated GP concerns about the need for a social movement to back up revolutionary groups. Like the early GP, ADi believed that a social movement would only develop after organized revolutionaries demonstrated that anti-government protest was viable and created an organization 'capable of giving impetus to the revolutionary movement in developed capitalist societies run by social democrats'.⁷⁴

'*Pour un projet communiste*' argued that Marxist-Leninism and anarchism are the models for left-wing revolution and that each had strengths and weaknesses. In hierarchical Marxist-Leninist parties, professional revolutionary leadership compensated 'working class inability to go beyond trade-union consciousness and free itself of reformist and bourgeois ideological temptations on its own'.⁷⁵ For its part, anarchism gave revolutionary struggle dynamism through 'spontaneity – or its present forms: creativity, desire . . . informal personal contacts, appropriation of daily life, concrete practice'.⁷⁶ ADi said the problem was that the two approaches polarized revolutionary action between bureaucracy (Marxist-Leninism) and disorganization (anarchism). It advocated workers' councils to remedy 'social democratic sinking into right-wing reaction or Stalinist "communism"'.⁷⁷ It did not consider the seizure of initiative or propagation of an idea by a minority of militants as a problem. On the contrary, it thought the

approach challenged authority and accustomed individuals to participation. The position echoes the GP's anti-hierarchical ideals. The group's analysis was a form of neo-Maoism that contradicted French political traditions of individual passivity and recapitulated a penchant for enlightened elitism. It was also a variety of utopianism typical of the French extreme-left fringe. ADi claimed that its positions reflected material restraints and a need for collective and individual self-development. Although it recognized that workers' councils would probably not emerge following terrorism, ADi said it was organizing for a later revolution and trying to head off a counter-offensive against revolution 'at the moment when the class enemy concentrates all of his strength and when his satellites encrusted in the movement try to break it or divert it into a siding'.⁷⁸ ADi said terrorism simply concentrated on the essentials of revolutionary struggle.⁷⁹ Although terrorist violence, 'in effect, is not a thing that can be appropriated, but a moment in a process',⁸⁰ it is an unfortunate consequence of struggling against the bourgeoisie:

Violence is there, self-legitimated, since it is the logical form of expression for those humiliated and ridiculed by the mechanisms of the capitalist mode of production; and it is not only a desperate reaction born from misery, it is a hopeful action that aims to surpass exploitation and domination through revolutionary practice. *Action directe* and all who share its reasoning are part of this process of rebellion.⁸¹

Unlike the GP, ADi argued that the alternative to violent struggle was obvious in the fate of the Prague Spring and Allende. It recognized that communism could not be built by guns, but insisted that weapons would guarantee survival. ADi believed that armed intervention in daily life would protect workers, 'where the masses experience the dead-ends of their existence today and invent the forms of refusal that will underlie the organization of tomorrow'.⁸² Like the GP, it supported regional, neighbourhood and workplace struggles by the exploited and oppressed. ADi described French imperialism as 'the supreme stage of decaying capitalism'⁸³ whose decline stemmed from its internal contradictions: 'dominant toward the Third World, dominated in relation to the EEC and American multinationals'.⁸⁴ The group said that the Leninist concept of imperialism centred on a handful of states that pillaged the world was inadequate and had been superseded by:

A system of determinants centred on technological power and the deculturation of the dominated through a Westernized model of production and consumption. With technology transfer, developing

countries go indefinitely into debt and accept being governed by managers and technicians from developed countries or natives trained in their universities, which is sometimes worse . . . if Western cultural norms have succeeded in crushing all resistance, the popular classes will have acceded to it while sacrificing their entire lives to the dream: the residents of Latin American shanty-towns often possess a TV and a pick-up, sometimes even a car; at the same time, their children die of hunger and adolescents turn to prostitution in rich neighbourhoods.⁸⁵

ADi said the global political economy was transformed after the US deliberately encouraged the 1970s petroleum crisis by the 'shutdown of the international monetary system to guarantee its power and stabilize the domination of developed countries'.⁸⁶ The result was allegedly a series of dominant-dominated negotiations that reproduced sterile management-trade union talks and created an international economic supervisory system:

The key institution is the IMF, which among other things inspired Pinochet's policies or the Turkish generals in the recent military takeover – 'the liberal change of direction' – or again the draconian conditions that led the Italian government to 'clean up' the economic situation that resulted from the 'rampant May' of 1969.⁸⁷

In the new global order, nuclear, agro-industrial, electronic and computer developments have strengthened global imperialism. In its former African colonies, France already had structures for control. ADi charged that Soviet-US collaboration exacerbated underdevelopment since the 'superficial industrialization it entailed is turned towards the metropolises, obstacles to development are renewed and only immediate profit is favoured'.⁸⁸ Domestically, ADi said, French capitalism negatively affected employment by encouraging speculation. The 1970s economic crisis obliged enterprises to cut employment, badly hitting women, minorities and older workers. Responsibility for job creation was left to the government, whose ETT (*entreprises de travail temporaire* – temporary work enterprises) programme only demolished the 'right to work achieved at such great cost, while barring any possibility of a political programme made for workers'.⁸⁹ France's entry into international economic competition in 1966–67 demonstrated that capitalists pursue their own interests. Companies relocated to the Third World, introduced high technology and reduced jobs through automation. In this light, ADi believed that the PS was continuing the work of right-wing governments: 'it is not the socialists who will really change things since their watchwords are rationalization and competitiveness'.⁹⁰

ADi focused on housing issues since their connection to work conditions were seen as a base on which to build support: 'capitalists attack proletarians' lives in the factory, they pursue them into their neighbourhoods by demolishing their traditional habitat and all the class solidarities attached to it'.⁹¹ In fact, the demolition and transformation of older Paris neighbourhoods under Pompidou, Giscard d'Estaing, Mitterrand and Mayor Jacques Chirac have profoundly changed the city. The Parisian working class was traditionally powerful because of the city's high concentration of industry, housing, highly-skilled workers and unionization: 'class struggle was physically written on the territory and architecture, with the bourgeois, their beautiful homes and grand boulevards in the west; in the east, the workers, their "ancient habitat", the maze of little streets where they lived in misery'.⁹²

Global competition, costs, automation and new housing have drastically altered Paris demography over the past 30 years. Most of the working class and industry have moved to the suburbs, away from traditional sites of labour conflict.⁹³ The move produced considerable stress, particularly since the freeing of older buildings fuelled real-estate speculation. ADi argued that the city's high apartment vacancy rate showed that property owners do not care about housing and 'let rot perfectly habitable older lodgings that rapidly become, quite naturally, damaged, unhealthy, and have to be demolished in the name of urban hygiene'.⁹⁴ It added that insufficient public housing starts exaggerated speculation.

ADi used this analysis of imperialism and immigration, employment and housing, and living conditions to judge the PS-PCF. The group argued that, after the 1960s, an incoherent world economy was founded on 'cynicism and contempt towards workers, peasants and students, and the generous distribution of gold to the financial oligarchy and higher state employees'.⁹⁵ The PS-PCF would not improve matters since European social democracy was a failure. ADi said that this was proved by the *Front populaire*, the Nazi extermination of the SPD and the fact that power structures are not altered by social democrats:

the economy remains completely dominated by the laws of capitalism and nationalization will not change a thing – is Renault not one of the spearheads of globalizing French capitalism, one of the promoters of the techniques of nationalization – capitalist modernization of the work process, a centre for social experimentation by employers?⁹⁶

ADi said improved planning, industrial policies, banking practices and employment regulations only reinforced French capitalism and excluded political or moral changes to economic behaviour. ADi vowed to fight an 'orientation that only aims or leads to renewal of a productive

mode that has crushed human life and dooms it to nuclear or ecological suicide'.⁹⁷ Condemning PS housing, industrial and regional development, education, communication, media and immigration policies, ADi argued that positive social change could not occur through capitalist economic 'restructuring'. This process only meant that the entire 'political class therefore fully plays the card of change within continuity and we can be sure that slander will fall on those who advance a communist plan'.⁹⁸ ADi evidently did not believe that it would succeed, but felt validated by French revolutionary traditions.

The final section of *'Pour un projet communiste'* concentrates on the 'forms of struggle' needed to transcend Marxist-Leninism and anarchism. ADi criticized post-May 1968 anti-authoritarian ideologies as the expression of social groups (students, teachers, social workers and activists) that are unrelated to production. ADi said it could not support activism that favoured non-work, refusal to work and 'a pro-situationist perspective that centres on celebration, games, the community, sexuality, etc.'. ⁹⁹ It argued that such attitudes divided the anti-capitalist struggle into abstract categories and obscured revolutionary interests, and in this way served capitalist interests. ADi's remedy was to develop 'non-authoritarian' factory and neighbourhood organizations that would use armed struggle to affirm the interests of the exploited and oppressed.¹⁰⁰ Factories were therefore a 'privileged field of battle' since they focused the struggle on restructuring (lay-offs, increased work pace, new control mechanisms, reduced job security) and facilitated worker self-organization. Like the LCR,¹⁰¹ ADi said technical and organizational skills would strengthen 'authentic proletarian internationalism' and coordination with Third World movements.

Capitalist restructuring was a central ADi concern. The group held that renewed economic growth, automation and computerization contradicted worker interests, strengthened exploitation and led to the decline of West European worker radicalism in the 1970s and 1980s. It argued that these changes detracted from the fight against international capitalism:

The present stakes for revolutionary organizations centre on understanding and being able to engineer a convergence of all struggle towards overthrowing the existing order. It is, for us, the communist project in the sense that Karl Marx said: 'Communism is the real movement that abolishes the existing state of things.' The decisive thrust of the communist project will be the transformation of mass illegality into armed struggle.¹⁰²

ADi advocated revolutionary violence as a response to restructuring and declining radicalism. 'Political intervention' in factories and neighbour-

hoods through 'illegal forms' was seen as a way to circumvent bourgeois limits on proletarian aspirations. Illegality also provided an opportunity 'to bring about the appearance of mass illegality and coordinate it under the form of a counter-power'.¹⁰³ An anti-establishment movement would develop when workers realized that: (1) a military-political network to enlarge counter-power was needed; and (2) illegal force was not an end in itself and voluntarism and adventurism should be avoided. ADi called armed struggle the 'new mass work, not only defence and reprisal, but the continuous anticipation of a movement'.¹⁰⁴

'Sur l'impérialisme américain' contended that the Versailles summit was the occasion for 'elaboration of a new global economic order'¹⁰⁵ in which the US redirected French foreign policy to suit its interests. Although the text reacted to a specific event, it also outlined positions on market deregulation, crisis management and emergence of the 'new system of accumulation that gestated during the crisis'.¹⁰⁶ ADi said the US restructured the global division of labour in the 1970s and 1980s. It believed that the 1974-75 petroleum shock epitomized a global economic struggle. In the early 1980s, ADi argued, the US ruthlessly responded to new conditions. After a new crisis created a 'world capitalist system',¹⁰⁷ US economic weakness was obvious through its poorly mechanized tertiary sector, 'more rigid norms and rhythms, [and] the collectivization of the productive process to blur the relationship between salary and individual effort'.¹⁰⁸ Increased costs had by this point destroyed the US lead in productivity, diminished its portion of global reproduction, shrivelled its multinationals' share of global investment, helped Japanese and European firms rise to the top 100 international companies and weakened exports.¹⁰⁹ The US responded by investing in the Third World and encouraging agriculture and advanced technology. ADi concluded that this 'transition to a new system of accumulation and new model of global regulation'¹¹⁰ made armed struggle necessary, especially since post-1960s movements used inadequate methods:

The assimilation of violent rebels like the Black Panthers and the industrial integration of the counter-culture, the normalization of deviances like drugs or homosexuality indicate that protest, if it does not attack the roots of capitalist power, can occur without major damage.¹¹¹

Taken together (they were published at roughly the same time), *'Pour un projet communiste'* and *'Sur l'impérialisme américain'* defined ADi orientations from 1982 to 1984 and set the ground for its assassination campaign. Following these guidelines, *'Nous, combattants juifs d'Action*

directe ...' said Israeli diplomats were 'the police of US imperialism'.¹¹² Opposition to the new global division of labour and absence of organized workers' movements were used as the immediate justifications for violence. At another level, ADi was anxious to overcome its political isolation. It therefore announced 'concrete goals' based on general orientations set out in August 1982. The goals were: to develop a 'political military front' to oppose NATO-led European homogenization; to build links to like-minded organizations; to target individuals; and to act in solidarity with Third World revolution. The direct implications were soon revealed when the World Bank and IMF were attacked in order to oppose European homogenization.

By 1984, it was clear that ADi was grimly determined to battle against capitalism at all costs. '*Mise au point No.2*', for example, stated that the police were entirely responsible for the Avenue Trudaine shootings: 'two policemen did not foresee the results of their reaction. They bear the entire responsibility for the consequences.'¹¹³ '*Mise au point No.3*' contended that extreme-left terrorism resulted from a West European social balance based on 'the contradiction between the international proletariat and the imperialist bourgeoisie'.¹¹⁴ The views of imprisoned ADi militants also hardened. '*Sur l'initiative du regroupement des militants révolutionnaires détenus (première partie)*' called arrest and imprisonment an

attempt to depoliticize our collective identity by reducing it to an individual criminal identity. It is an attempt to depoliticize the instrument that fundamentally characterizes our revolutionary existence: armed struggle for communism. To struggle against the attempt to annihilate politically our revolutionary subjectivity and against the forms through which this annihilation occurs, that is, through mystification, repression and isolation, is to struggle for the appropriation of social and communication space between ourselves and between the outside world and ourselves.¹¹⁵

ADi said the PS rejected revolution and refused to give AD prisoners political status because it accepted 'bourgeois hegemony'. Imprisoned AD members thus had to resist the destruction of their human and political identities. The term 'terrorist' was seen as a further attempt to destroy revolutionary movements; 'the entire Western bourgeoisie now uses the term against those who struggle for freedom and who, in this struggle, express an irreconcilable rupture with imperialist interests'.¹¹⁶ Spano said 'terrorism' referred to illegal groups, 'the only context where it is possible to express oneself autonomously'.¹¹⁷ He argued that demanding political status would draw working-class prisoners into ADi's struggle:

a first step, even if partial, in the direction of practical criticism of the policy of prison differentiation, since it opens the possibility of a link (even if only at a level of general communication) between the struggle of revolutionary militants and the rest of the imprisoned proletariat.¹¹⁸

Since it saw European homogenization as equally threatening to the working class and prisoners, ADi argued that 'the objective existence of militant revolutionary struggles in prison and the condition of the metropolitan proletariat detainees make the struggle one and the same'.¹¹⁹ Imprisoned 'proletariats' and militants joined the victims of bourgeois subjugation.¹²⁰ The point of view was echoed by other AD prisoners. Helyette Besse¹²¹ demanded political status, family visits, unification of 'revolutionary' prisoners, the right to hold meetings, an end to isolation conditions and denounced the extradition and deportation of non-French activists.¹²² Schleicher said the prisoners' hunger-strike was meaningful as 'part of the overall framework in which the proletariat again takes an offensive to organize its freedom'.¹²³ Detention was 'capital's plan to individualize forcibly our identity', 'the moment of unification between basic resistance and an organized offensive between the interior and exterior fronts'.¹²⁴ The prisoners said their 'combat' was jointly conducted 'with our comrades in the *Red Army Faction*'.¹²⁵

Criticism of prison conditions accompanied increased ADi attacks on NATO and 'Atlanticist' targets. An attack on the *Institut Atlantique des Affaires Internationales* allegedly hit a 'cell for imperialist thought and propaganda', 'a point of practical convergence between various sectors of international capital, so-called scientific research and its military application'.¹²⁶ According to ADi, the institute's directors, members and financing revealed its imperialist character:

The management is entirely American, enfeoffed to NATO. At the highest levels of the institute, representatives of transnational capital are found; thus Italy is represented by Fiat CEO Agnelli. Financing is done by private and state enterprises, the latter including Crédit Agricole, Elf-Aquitaine or Renault, but NATO ensures the main financing.¹²⁷

ADi asserted that institute research on industrial restructuring, missile implantation and European military-economic unification was part and parcel of NATO strategy. Such activities illustrated the need 'to attack and upset the imperialist system at all command levels'.¹²⁸ ADi dropped any reference to domestic social revolution in favour of defeating 'imperialist projects', understanding that the global context and lack of social support

excluded it from the political agenda. Its response was to attack the representatives of capital physically and expound a political position in unison with like-minded European groups. Throughout, ADi believed that revolutionary consciousness could only develop through violence: 'only by simultaneously developing class strength and victories will we develop the consciousness necessary for further victories'.¹²⁹

Attacks on French defence ministry computer services and the SIAR (*Surveillance industrielle de l'armement* – Industrial Supervision of Armament) continued this political line. ADi declared that the SIAR was 'in charge of technical supervision and financial payments for armament orders given to industry'¹³⁰ and epitomized the 'intensification of arms spending at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s'.¹³¹ The group viewed militarism as 'the life-preserver to which capitalism clings each time its inherent system strengths teeter on the abyss of crisis'.¹³² It concluded that French complicity in Western military modernization justified terrorism. Beyond this, Euro-missile implantation demonstrated the futility of peaceful protest in a system based on militarism, psychological warfare and industrial restructuring. Since economic restructuring revealed weakness, terrorism was the 'only response to the tendency to imperialist war'.¹³³ Violence blended working-class interests and a political challenge; 'the crisis of the system's economic foundations combines with a crisis of political domination'.¹³⁴

Combating 'imperialist' institutions also motivated the ESA attack. Schleicher denounced the Ariane programme as a 'practical base to apply the imperialist strategy of domination of NATO and its enfeoffed flunkie, the French state'.¹³⁵ Ariane work by armament manufacturers Matra and Thomson maintained France's 'overseas ideological empire' and nuclear and rapid deployment forces. '*Une action contre l'European Space Agency*' argued that the ESA 'allows inter-European contradictions and any weakness that could result to be surpassed'.¹³⁶ ADi said the US cynically encouraged the ESA to manipulate European communications technology. It listed a series of projects that allegedly embodied US domination of Europe:

- Marecs 'observation' and 'communication' satellites: civil and military mobile naval telecommunications;
- ECS, European Communications Satellite: point-to-point liaison between fixed terminals;
- Telecom 1: military, inter-enterprise and civil telecommunications and computer data transmissions;
- Skynet: British military telecommunications programme that employs the telecom platform;

- Intelsat: American-conceived global organization, geostationary satellite communications;
- Spot: preliminary earth observation system;
- Syracus: radio-communications system using a satellite made for the national navy;
- Ers: tele-detection satellite;
- Samro: exclusively military observation satellite (project frozen in 1982 due to lack of funds); real possibility that it will reappear due to Franco-German agreement.¹³⁷

ADi said the mask of 'science' hid the military ends of projects that resembled 'Nazi medical experiments, atom experimentation and American bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, chemical experiments during the Vietnamese War ... the 'scientific' use of torture during the Algerian liberation war right through to sensory deprivation today'.¹³⁸ ADi claimed that it was opposed to the military use of science, not to pure research.

The next institute to be hit was the WEU. It was selected for its participation in global restructuring¹³⁹ and its role in integrating

all European countries into the Atlantic block, in particular through resolving the problem of the former Axis countries: Germany and Italy. The enemies of yesterday needed to be reunited since, as Churchill expressed it: 'In cutting down Nazism, we killed the wrong pig.' In the name of capital, the Soviet Union became the principal enemy.¹⁴⁰

The 'European and Atlantic'¹⁴¹ WEU was called a centre for continental and PS defence thought and planning. Its projects covered 'Atlantic interests, which consist in making Europeans pay for defence and letting capitalist interests develop capital through the arms industry'.¹⁴² Revolutionary communists had to fight this trend and overcome 'scattered, isolated communist tendencies ... a uniquely tactical perception, of workerism'.¹⁴³ Strikes against arms manufacturers Messier-Hispano-Bugatti and Dassault were also undertaken to 'place our struggle in an overall offensive strategy. The end is to construct an armed proletarian strategy against the extermination being carried out by Dassault and its consorts'.¹⁴⁴ Dassault arms sales in the Vietnam War showed that its role in imperialist strategy was 'exactly that of post-World War Two French capital'.¹⁴⁵ Dassault was denounced for its participation in:

projects essential to the integration process at a European level: the ACX, the fighter plane of the 1990s jointly produced by European partners (Germany, Spain, Great Britain, Italy) and representing a 'fabulous' market of 800 planes, – the military use of space in which

Dassault already actively participates by its close collaboration with Aérospatiale, supplying the Ariane pyrotechnic system through which it hoped to remain central by studying the 'Hermes' European space shuttle.¹⁴⁶

ADi said Dassault's ties to 'Christian Lenzer (member of the CDU, the West German Christian Democratic Party), member of the WEU Assembly standing committee on scientific issues',¹⁴⁷ linked it to homogenization. Messier-Hispano-Bugatti, for its part, worked 'together with the defence ministry for European and American arms factories (Mirage, Jaguar, Boeing and MacDouglas)'.¹⁴⁸

ADi's focus on internationally-linked organizations ultimately propelled it into its final phase (1985–87). *Pour l'unité des révolutionnaires en Europe de l'ouest* confirmed its internationalization and alliance with the RAF by proclaiming a joint offensive against NATO and Franco-German co-operation. ADi henceforth dedicated itself to a 'West European guerrilla war' against NATO. It called this an 'authentic revolutionary strategy'. The group contended that its struggle was crucial due to 'the centrality of Western Europe to imperialist redeployment, a consequence of the breach opened in the balance of power by the liberation struggles of peoples on the periphery'.¹⁴⁹ *Pour l'unité des révolutionnaires en Europe de l'ouest* was a caricature of ADi's early vision of a broadly based anti-capitalist movement. The final product was not a French revolutionary movement, but a Euro-terrorist network impelled by new 'essential tasks for the communist guerrilla in Western Europe'.¹⁵⁰ ADi described EC integration as an 'attempt to weld European states into a homogeneous structure, a solid bloc that would be completely integrated into the core of imperialist power: NATO being the most advanced structure of domination'.¹⁵¹ The new vision ignored ADi's lack of support in favour of claims that it acted out of international solidarity. ADi and the RAF proclaimed that they were opposing a broad imperialist offensive on: (1) assaults on Asian, African and Central American revolutionary movements; (2) rising Western military spending and political coordination (Euro-missile installation, WEU renewal, French rapid deployment force development, NATO arms cooperation, discussions over West German *force de frappe* cooperation and French reintegration into NATO); (3) common Western counter-insurgency strategies; and (4) US-led electronics and arms technologies research and production in Western Europe. They described US economic moves in Europe as a grab for global control by the 'imperialist block – USA, Japan, Western Europe'.¹⁵²

The two groups jointly began to attack NATO military bases, strategists, plans and propaganda to point the way to a 'West European proletarian

political strategy in changed political conditions'.¹⁵³ The strategy signalled increased violence, ideological coherence and international coordination. ADi joined a Euro-terrorist network made up of Portuguese, Belgian, Greek, Spanish and West German terrorists to attain 'the material transformation of proletarian internationalism dictated by present circumstances'.¹⁵⁴ It dropped any effort to claim domestic support, but did refer itself to national politics. The group's new combativeness was dramatically illustrated by Audran's murder, which ADi said eliminated an individual central to an imperialist institution. Such individuals were reified into 'imperialist objects'. The assassination concretized a 'revolutionary front in the West European metropolis'¹⁵⁵ because Audran was NATO's 'main link in the Defence Ministry; the person responsible for arms coordination, and marketing throughout the IEPF (Independent European Programs Group), a NATO structure, and the CIEEMG (Cabinet Committee on War Materials Exports)'.¹⁵⁶

ADi argued that Franco-German cooperation was the tip of the iceberg of the imperialist offensive and European homogenization since the two countries divided tasks according to 'US imperialist strategy: France with its geostrategic influence and *force de frappe*, West Germany with its economic and financial strength and its army (quantitatively, NATO's largest)'.¹⁵⁷ In this context, the PS brought 'European countries increasingly strong international links by in fact enlarging economic and military manoeuvring room and by guaranteeing that European defence propaganda would neutralize protest and the contradictions created by US domination through its military structure in Europe, NATO'.¹⁵⁸

Revendication de l'attaque contre le FMI et la Banque mondiale said both organizations aided world imperialism by preparing the Bonn summit and catalogued a series of events as proof:

- World Bank and IMF meetings in the USA
- symposium of NATO industrial groups in Brussels
- OECD and EEC meetings
- WEU assembly
- Venice international conference on technological development and employment etc . . .¹⁵⁹

ADi claimed that since the Bonn summit would be followed by an acceleration of imperialist strategy, it called for a response: 'communism does not develop through radical positions in texts. It is conceived in an accurate analysis of situations and the implementation of a practice capable of resolving and going beyond them'.¹⁶⁰ Revolutionaries must 'never retreat before the enormity of their goals'.¹⁶¹ To further this principle, TRT and SAT were hit. TRT was the leading European manufacturer of

altimeters, instruments that determine aircraft altitude. The company was reproached as

- the developer of the radio-altimeter for *Cruise* nuclear missiles, *Aérospatiale Exocets*, those who outfit mixed NATO missiles, and, more precisely, in collaboration with Messerschmitt (MBB), for *Roland* missiles
- the most qualified researcher in the area of optronics, the spy observation sector that will soon provide NATO with a highly precise military information system.¹⁶²

The other firm, SAT, was attacked because it developed infra-red locating systems with military applications.¹⁶³ ADi condemned both firms for collaborating in the development of SMT (*système modulaire thermique* – thermal modular system) for military vehicles and research on MIRA night-sighting devices for Milan anti-tank missiles.¹⁶⁴

A second assassination attempt directed at individuals working in imperialist institutions was then aimed at Blandin, who,

as army chief inspector . . . [has been] one of the main persons in charge at the Ministry of Defence since the social democrats took power; he is more precisely Hernu's right arm in applying plans to restructure and integrate NATO forces, the armed forces and the war industry.¹⁶⁵

As ADi explained in the '*Interview au journal révolutionnaire "Zusammen Kampfen"*' (*"Combattre ensemble"*),¹⁶⁶ this attack represented a decisive clarification of its ideology that responded to 'the acceleration and crystallization of old projects in one: Eureka'.¹⁶⁷ ADi said that Eureka was the culmination of Franco-German cooperation and showed that homogenization now extended beyond NATO and the EC to Switzerland, Sweden and Austria.¹⁶⁸ The group argued that France was fully integrated into this network:

its arms systems follow NATO norms and its defence and attack positions are planned in Brussels, at the Atlanticist organization's headquarters in order to be inter-operational with the member countries of the military command, in fact integrating the French army to NATO strategic attack forces. In addition, close French–West German military cooperation creates 'a real Franco-German pillar within the alliance'.¹⁶⁹

ADi supplied a list of French links to NATO: development of *Aérospatiale* missile technology; negotiations to extend France's nuclear umbrella over West Germany; support for US Persian Gulf operations; connivance with NATO industrial programmes; and creation of a European

defence study group. ADi said SDI and Eureka research by French state firms 'underlines France's offensive position in the development of imperialist strategy'.¹⁷⁰ Eureka was labelled a US-directed political–military project with dire 'consequences' for the West European working class:

it is a question of simultaneously restoring the solvency of the financial system in industrialized and Third World countries so as to relaunch investment, the race for profits needed for greater exploitation, by reorganizing work through the computerization and automation of production sectors.¹⁷¹

ADi said European cartels maintained US supremacy. It added that nationalization of the French armament, electronic, computer, robotic, aeronautic, nuclear, chemical and agro-industrial sectors after 1982 was part of a broader process of technological and industrial concentration. The newly nationalized sectors complemented existing public sector banks and industrial groups. ADi said imperialist market internationalization necessitated attacks on 'central links'¹⁷² as a 'qualitative leap towards formation of the West European guerrilla movement, a new phase in the development of an authentic revolutionary strategy'.¹⁷³ The attacks on Audran, Blandin, Brana and the Frankfurt air base were part of this strategy. '*Communiqué No. 1*' called Brana a prominent agent 'of French economic and industrial policy in the development of overall imperialist strategy'.¹⁷⁴

'*Communiqué No. 2*' explained that the Interpol attack added 'by its force and reach to the acquisitions and objective resolutions obtained'¹⁷⁵ by the campaign. Strikes on the *Institut Atlantique*, Frankfurt air base, and the entire 'West European guerrilla' were said to be resolving problems, even if 'this is still not clearly seen by the whole of the revolutionary movement'.¹⁷⁶ The assaults expressed the 'unity of revolutionaries in Western Europe' and 'a political–military revolutionary strategy'¹⁷⁷ that gave new coherence to anti-imperialism. Specifically, it broke 'the "inexorably" chaotic aspect to which the French extreme left harnessed itself during 15 years of revolutionary promises in institutionalized rebellion, signs at demonstrations, treasonous renunciation, and alibis in criticism'.¹⁷⁸ Striking at Interpol allegedly hit a point at which the differentiation between the dominant and oppressed was clear. ADi claimed that Interpol was an organization that epitomized the conflict between the masses and counter-revolutionary forces. In its eyes, Brana represented and directed

the public industrial sector/employers' organization/business party bloc, motor of the general 'anti-crisis strategy that stands for formation of combines, industrial and technological concentration, Reaganite

market economy, flexibility, social deregulation, individualization of salary policies, anti-worker repression in and outside of the factory.¹⁷⁹

ADi described Brana as a prototypical technocrat of contemporary capitalism who could 'transform imperialism into technocratic imperialism'.¹⁸⁰ He threatened the international working class by contributing to West European homogenization under both right- and left-wing governments, both of which subordinated France's public sector to the private one and imperialism. Even the Chirac government's privatization programme was not a 'disruption in the centrality of the public industrial sector and its relations to technological and industrial concentration, these denationalizations will simply be a new step in the homogenization of Western Europe'.¹⁸¹ The group argued that restructuring of the private and public sectors was a preparation for war. It believed that this was irrefutably demonstrated by the fact that the Tokyo summit 'was preceded by two months of intensified war against "terrorism" with a flash point: the bombing of Libya'.¹⁸² At the same time, events in Angola, Israel, South Africa, Haiti and the Philippines were cited as evidence that imperialism was adjusting to local conditions. In this light, ADi said revolutionary violence against Interpol hit 'NATO's police section and one of the main instruments in American intervention policy: the doctrine of low-intensity conflicts. This includes three forms of military intervention: classical counter-guerrilla, active defence against "terrorism", and support for anti-communist guerrillas'.¹⁸³

Interpol's centrality to imperialism was allegedly proven when American John R. Simpson became its president after the US called for global anti-terrorist action. The appointment of Briton Raymond Kendall as Interpol secretary-general also confirmed its role in information coordination. While anti-terrorist measures repressed workers, ADi said, NATO-led coordination facilitated 'super-specialized police units, its bunch of paid informers, the army in the police stations of large cities, repeated searches in the ghettos, attacks/bloody provocations/assassinations organized by the secret services and bodyguards of all types'.¹⁸⁴

After hitting the OECD, ADi declared that the anti-imperialist offensive 'must be conducted consciously, concretely and as widely as possible in the same direction so as to concretize, develop and go beyond present victories'.¹⁸⁵ To create effective West European communist organizations,

we must not only fight bourgeois forces, but annihilate and go beyond the unhealthy reactions encrusted in the revolutionary movement, which create even more separations, barriers and frontiers by those who advocate organization for its own sake, who only invest in action

for its own sake, these militarists thirsty for notoriety, little 'bonzes' in search of an audience.¹⁸⁶

The passage was aimed at ADn's robbery campaign and Olivier's posture as a Maoist guru within the Lyon group. ADi charged that ADn neglected method and systematic work in favour of a 'radicalism of the bazaar [that] represents nothing but the incorrigible attitude of the *petite bourgeoisie* perpetually trying to turn what little activity it engages in into quick profit'.¹⁸⁷ ADi cited its own attack on the OECD as a more serious form of militancy that hit the coordinators of imperialism who were involved in 'the formation/coordination of the strategies of international capital and the policies of the imperialist network of states against the pressures coming from the economic accentuation of the crisis, growing antagonism and international proletarian struggles'.¹⁸⁸ ADi feared that ADn would only provoke police action that would ultimately threaten its own campaign.

Determination to strike surgically culminated in the murder of Georges Besse. The act was intended to put ADi at the heart of the 'Western revolutionary struggle' by hitting 'at the very heart of the strongest contradiction within the general consensus on pacification and exploitation'.¹⁸⁹ The murder also ended an offensive for the 'reconstruction of class in Western Europe'¹⁹⁰ that forged links to other Euro-terrorists. Assassinations were part of what ADi termed 'the acceleration and accentuation of class antagonism'.¹⁹¹ This pressure was also evident in Franco-German security coordination: 'bloody repression, police provocations, institution of villainous laws, and the questioning of workplace rights'.¹⁹² ADi hoped that France's 1986-87 student demonstrations and SNCF strikes meant that its message had reached a wide public. It hopefully viewed the protests as a rejection of capitalist selection that would completely throw into question

the very substance of the economic policy of rationalization and imperialist concentration. The common element (refusal of 'merit' and capitalist selection, around which battle rages and which counter-propaganda attempts to drown and suffocate in the most complete media confusion) was too dangerous because it expressed a deepened reflection and action against the upholders of the capitalist mode of production.¹⁹³

Hopeful that social unrest heralded new conflict in Western Europe, ADi argued that the bourgeoisie disguised class war as criminality 'bereft of any objective sense in the general and specific political situation'.¹⁹⁴ In reality, all social unrest was a struggle 'ending in the annihilation of one or two sides'.¹⁹⁵ For a 'revolutionary avant-garde'¹⁹⁶ like ADi, the deportation of foreign workers made international class struggle objectively necessary.¹⁹⁷ Besse was killed because of his importance in international restructuring

and his role as 'the advanced element of bourgeois repression of the workers' movement'.¹⁹⁸ The group believed that he would not easily be replaced: 'the negotiations after the Besse assassination showed by their length (more than a month) that super-experts on restructuring are in short supply'.¹⁹⁹ His role in restructuring was in any event obvious at Renault, a firm that has long been a laboratory for French management techniques:

Renault, social display window, exemplary political myth of consensus, of pacification through consumerism, of access for all to 'material happiness', took on a character that went beyond the simple construction of cars, armed vehicles or robots. 'Exemplarity' is but one of the multiple forms of the capitalist will to pacify and integrate the proletariat into the capitalist model.²⁰⁰

Because Renault was 'after 1945 continually . . . at the heart of the central contradictions of the capitalist mode of production',²⁰¹ Besse was central to the French and global economies. By attacking Besse, ADi thought it attacked a central organism in the national and global economy, which was a means to 'brutally insert the representation of worker power into the heart of their [capitalist] strategy and thus to make their entire project more fragile in its different facets, and to construct the consciousness necessary to develop proletarian politics'.²⁰² Seeing its struggle as international, ADi positioned itself as a pivotal element in the French workers' movement. Being unable to revive a domestic revolutionary movement no longer mattered, since ADi now had an international network: 'the communist struggle includes and inserts the centrality of workers' struggle into the overall struggle developing against global exploitation and oppression'.²⁰³ ADi now described itself as an 'aspect' of the workers' movement, 'conscious of the necessities and ends of the general class struggle movement'.²⁰⁴ It argued that armed struggle was part of working-class movements until communist parties and unions dropped it after the Second World War. Violence re-emerged in West Germany and Italy owing to revolutionary concentration on proletarian needs. In France, the 1968 revolutionary movement veered 'into the new philosophy and liberated journalism'.²⁰⁵ ADi believed that it was redeeming an error and violently reconstructing an authentic working-class struggle.²⁰⁶ This hermetic logic held long after any potential support had disappeared.

AD's ideology and political violence

The three phases of AD's ideological development were 1979–81, 1982–84 and 1984–87. The group's behaviour, motives and use of violence varied in each period. By 1987, the two ADs had little contact with one another.

In fact, each criticized the other with mounting bitterness, sarcasm and contempt. The schism stemmed from divergent analyses of conditions, evaluations of their impact on revolutionary organization, and strategic conclusions. The split was a microcosm of the classic divisions in French political culture. Many issues that AD raised entered mainstream politics before, during or after its active period: nationalism, European integration, anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, anti-Semitism and *tier-mondisme*. Several of these concerns traditionally divide the left and right while others internally differentiate the left. Their presence in AD's ideology was part of its effort to attract attention and support. The group cast a wide ideological net that mirrored changes under way in France. A notable difference between ADi and ADn was their networks. ADi participated in a Euro-terrorist network that became a chronic political and security nuisance in several West European countries in the mid-1980s. ADn never had the ideological coherence of ADi, but survived by good organization, robberies and intimidation. The importance of organization for terrorists was driven home when Rouillan and Ménigon were captured in 1980. Both groups were ultimately dismantled because of the firm bipartisan policy of left and right. The political elite realized that AD was lethal.

Both ADi and ADn condemned Israel and the US because of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Both used 'anti-imperialist' and 'anti-Zionist' rhetoric. '*Sur l'impérialisme américain*' went further and specified ADi's views about the reorganization of global economic classes. It saw the Lebanese invasion as part of this process. ADi further argued that resource extraction, biological and pharmacological research, agri-business and high-technology were intimately connected to militarism. After Rizzato's death and the capture of Spano, ADi's Euro-terrorist network was exposed and the group bared its teeth on the Avenue Trudaine. ADn continued to focus on the PS and the military. After 1982, both organizations were ideologically and organizationally re-equipped to oppose the PS administration. By 1984, ADi's ideology was sharply defined. It became more violent after it declared a guerrilla war on European Americanization. It targeted the Western military and organizations that conceived, facilitated or undertook military coordination and research because it viewed them as symbols of US dominance. In the same period, ADn attacked the RPR and Elf-Aquitaine to show that it opposed the French establishment. Although ADn texts linked French and American imperialism, the 'defeat of imperialist projects' was not a central goal. It viewed French imperialism as the primary threat to its ends while internationalist ADi conceived revolution in Western Europe as an extension of the global struggle. ADi and the RAF thus selectively assassinated individuals as a complement to Middle Eastern, southern African and Latin American revolution. Their

struggle concentrated on world imperialist centres, US interests in Western Europe and global domination.²⁰⁷ Finally, ADi threatened key public personalities.²⁰⁸ In contrast, although ADn murdered Marsden and bombed the Paris judicial police headquarters, these events occurred after most of the group was already in custody.

Taken as one unit, the scope and implications of AD attacks steadily expanded. As both groups' respective personalities crystallized and their orientations clarified, they became more violent. After 1982, an increasing number of precise human targets were selected. Appendices 5.2 to 5.5 (pages 182–5) illustrate the relationship of AD's ideological development to violence.²⁰⁹ The charts distinguish AD's violence according to type and categorize it by quarry, intensity and cadence. Bombs, for example, are considered to be a more intense form of violence than are machine-gun attacks. Political motives are clarified by differentiating premeditated from unpremeditated killings. ADi's political assassinations were aimed at a specific audience. Unpremeditated murders, like ADn's murder of Guy Delfosse, had indirect political motives. These charts are designed to highlight the merits of ideological interpretations of French political violence. In particular, they show that assassinations were linked to radicalization. Evaluating ideological motives is crucial in evaluating the threat of French political violence. AD's threat was statistically negligible, but examining the levels and types of attacks helps to verify the claim that terrorist violence threatens the state. Appendices 5.2 to 5.5 show that AD's acts had relatively insignificant material impact and suggest that they are best evaluated in *political* terms. The public considered AD dangerous because it knew that domestic political violence could be destabilizing. In fact, AD directly attempted to exploit rising unrest in the period before the 1986 legislative elections. The presence of left-wing revolutionary terrorists mobilized parts of the right-wing electorate, discouraged the left and may have compensated opposition losses to the FN. Law and order were thus central to the Chirac campaign and his government's 1986–88 legislative agenda. The right knew that AD embarrassed the PS.

Appendix 5.2 shows that attacks increased in two separate periods: 1979–80 and 1981–86.²¹⁰ In 1979–80, AD tried to inspire autonomist revolt. From 1981 to 1986, ADi's ideology radicalized and both groups reached the height of their activity. The rising curves generally correspond to political changes. Although AD tried to resurrect youth and extreme-left revolt in 1979–80, it decried the PS–PCF and tried to draw out what it thought were latent revolutionary tendencies after 1981. Appendix 5.3 focuses on one form of violence: small-arms attacks.²¹¹ It shows the impact that ideological radicalization had on AD's method. The group initially used small arms against material targets, but later turned them on human

ones. Small arms were frequently used in 1979–81, during AD's less radical, less violent, more ideologically eclectic and organizationally formative phase. The use of small arms decreased as ADi radicalized. Their use rose when AD attacked international targets and faced tough anti-terrorist pressure. Appendix 5.4, which focuses on bomb attacks from 1979 to 1987, can be similarly interpreted.²¹² Bomb attacks increased, decreased and accelerated according to right–left political changes. 'Political' targets like ministries and international organizations were bombed more often than were, for example, banks. Bomb attacks decreased in 1981–82. The pace increased after 1982 and especially in 1983–85, when the group tried to exploit the unrest over unpopular PS austerity budgets. Bomb attacks decreased when the right returned to power in 1986. AD apparently began to prepare for an anti-terrorist onslaught, re-evaluate goals, and try to force the government to act first.

Appendix 5.5 focuses on murders, which are typically used to illustrate the terrorist threat to society.²¹³ AD's murders are simply not comparable to groups like ETA or the IRA since the numbers are small, but it did threaten specific individuals. When the number of murders is juxtaposed to ideological radicalization, a relationship between political motives and killings is demonstrable. AD murders were initially minimal. In the early 1980s, however, ADi decided that murder was a valuable tool and it became a regular feature of group activities. Appendix 5.6 shows, especially by illustrating the dramatic increase in murders after the AD–RAF alliance, that the group's ideological radicalization and deadliness are linked.²¹⁴ 'Tactical killings', unpremeditated murders during bank robberies that have no directly political motives, rose dramatically in 1980–81 while the Paris group was in jail. ADn apparently increased robberies to finance operations and reorganization. Murders during robberies declined in 1982, while the group engaged in a debate that ultimately divided it. After the split, murders increased in 1983–84, reflecting a determination to fight the PS. Both groups continued to seek better material–financial foundations. After 1983–84, murders during robberies dropped as both wings returned to their political agendas.

AD's political danger was posed late in the history of both groups. Political murders only rose in the period leading up to *cohabitation*. Both groups charged that the PS was treacherous and that it was about to betray socialism by sharing power with the right. The only politically motivated murder before 1985 'settled accounts' with police informer Chahine. In 1985–86, ADi explicitly turned to political assassination. Overall, ideological change accompanied increases and declines in premeditated and unpremeditated murders. When AD ideology was less rigid, its murders were usually unpremeditated, tactical or, in its own terms, 'defensive'.

When ADi's ideology was more defined and its enemies more clearly specified, political murders increased markedly. Overall, AD's political terrorism was more threatening when it radicalized. The curves of premeditated and unpremeditated murders cross in 1982, following condemnation of the PS and the internal schism.

Foreign policy and defence issues were important to both sections of AD. The preoccupation is entirely understandable in light of French history and the enduring role of *grandeur*. The latter especially demonstrates how political violence might emerge in France. Since foreign policy and defence issues were a corner-stone of the Fifth Republic consensus, they might initially appear to be an improbable basis for extremism. However, AD reacted to the mainstream left's acceptance of the Fifth Republic, market economies and efforts to integrate France into the NATO system. The lack of response to AD's call for revolutionary action demonstrates that the consensus was strong and that a left-wing revolution was unlikely. The rise of extreme-left fringe violence against a reformist left-wing government suggests several questions for further exploration. Would a PCI government that accepted NATO have provoked Italian extreme-left terrorism in the 1980s? Is the analogy in some way applicable to the struggle between ETA and the Spanish government? Would negotiation of an Ulster settlement provoke terrorism in Britain or Ireland by a dissatisfied rump? Would increased US defence spending under a Democratic administration provoke terrorism? Would a comprehensive peace settlement lead to indigenous extremist violence in Israel?

In addition to expressing an extremist reaction to reformism, AD's ideological evolution juxtaposed specific policy. Its early period corresponded to the rise in anti-Americanism that accompanied the Reagan administration and the Euro-missile debate. No significant French group reacted negatively to Mitterrand's endorsement of Euro-missiles in a 1983 speech to the West German Bundestag. French opinion on defence and foreign policy was at the time quite homogeneous. It was based on several shared views: that the French military was an expression of the 'nation'; suspicion of Soviet intentions; anti-communism; and a desire to anchor West Germany solidly in a Western defence system. Ironically, Mitterrand's speech fuelled ADi's campaign against the PS by confirming the group's worst suspicions. Ties to NATO became a central justification for ADi's armed violence. While residual anti-Americanism is a potent fringe issue in France, commitment to the Atlantic alliance is no longer a serious bone of contention. A 1984–88 military plan referred to the USSR as the adversary for the first time. De Gaulle avoided doing so to highlight national independence, short-circuit the PCF and portray France as a great power. The *rapprochement* to NATO corresponded to ADi's radical

and most deadly phase.²¹⁵ Both groups justified their acts with reference to the PS. Although the right said the left was 'soft' on terrorism, the PS government increased security, anti-terrorist task forces and inter-governmental co-ordination. Finally, AD's ideology suggests that 'terrorist groups' may be multifarious and contradicts the notion of a monolithic world network. The two ADs posed different threats. French extreme-left terrorist factions seem as schismatic as other political organizations.

ADi's strike at the 'heart of the military-industrial complex' mixed nihilism and Stalinism. The group rejected any possibility that authentic social change could result from reformist tactics. The absolute nature of its rejection recapitulated some elements of Sergei Nechaev's nihilism. Nechaev viewed the revolutionary as 'a doomed man', a disinterested, uninvolved, unsentimental, unattached, propertyless, nameless individual who shed convention in order to embody revolution. The image is strikingly similar to ADi's view of itself as a socio-political avant-garde. Like Nechaev, AD viewed revolution in terms of images: the future; hope, and the people. It saw revolution as the only valid motive for action and the sole justification for violence. In Marxist-Leninist language that reflected its French extreme-left origins, AD tried to shed any 'external' emotional or personal constraints that would hinder revolution. It also despised the existing order. AD followed Nechaev's maxim: 'should he continue to live in it [society], it will be solely for the purpose of destroying it the more surely'.²¹⁶

NOTES

1. 'Long live terrorism! Finally, France is having a ball!' (wall graffiti in Paris, Sept. 1986). The graffiti is a play on words. 'Eclater' means to 'blow up' or 'explode'. In the reflexive form, it means to 'have a ball' or 'let oneself go'.
2. Peter Paret, 'Clausewitz', in P. Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.200.
3. See Ch.4.
4. Bifo, 'Anatomy of Autonomy', in *Semiotext(e)*, Vol.III, No.3 (1980), p.156.
5. Ibid., p.161.
6. For the theoretical bases of Italian and West German extreme-left terrorists, see Philippe Raynaud, '*Les origines intellectuelles du terrorisme*', in *Terrorisme et démocratie* (Paris: Fayard, 1985), pp.35–135.
7. For a list of targets, see above, Ch.4.
8. Cited from Edward Moxon-Browne, 'Terrorism in France', in William Gutteridge (ed.), *Contemporary Terrorism* (New York: Facts on File, 1986). The attacks are explicable in terms of Rouillan's origins and the emergence of Toulouse as an aeronautic, space and computer industry centre.
9. '*Après Kolwezi, Gafsa, Djibouti, etc., vous avez le bonjour de Barbès. Signé: Action directe.*' Untitled, 15 March 1980.
10. French paratroopers put down a rebellion in Kolwezi, Zaïre in 1979. Djibouti is the site of a large military base. Gafsa is a town in Tunisia, a former French colony that still has strong neo-colonial ties.

11. 'Communiqué numéro 7', 18 March 1980. See Appendix 5.1.
12. 'La prospérité du commerce néo-colonialiste de la marchandise et de la main-d'œuvre.' Ibid.
13. 'Toute la politique française pue.' Ibid.
14. 'Les donneurs de coups de trique... ont la même gueule.' Ibid.
15. 'L'Etat négrier'. 'Lutter contre la politique impérialiste de la France en Afrique, c'est lutter contre l'Etat français dans la globalité de ses institutions.' Ibid.
16. 'Communiqué No.2', Feb. 1982. See Ch.4.
17. Terrorism is often punished by isolation imprisonment in France and Germany. In AD's case, the practice became a human-rights issue for non-AD activists. In July 1989, wall graffiti on the Rue de Charonne near the Bastille read: 'A Bastille moderne, torture moderne. Fermez les quartiers d'isolement' ('In the modern Bastille, modern torture. Close the isolation cells').
18. 'L'état socialiste prétend avoir supprimé l'arbitraire mais il impose à Gilles l'isolement car prisonnier politique il en revendique le statut.'
19. 'Refus de consensus.'
20. 'L'anéantissement des prolétaires emprisonnés est aujourd'hui le fait de l'état social-démocrate.' Ibid.
21. See above Ch.2 and Azéma and Winock, *La troisième République* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1970).
22. Recall that the Lyon group called itself 'Affiche rouge' until 1982.
23. 'Nous exproprions par les armes le capital au profit des luttes de décolonisation totale.'
24. 'Toute la France, pour le peuple polonais, revendique liberté et indépendance. Et pour les DOM-TOM, pays africains?'
25. 'Retrait immédiat et inconditionnel des fascistes israéliens. Si les Palestiniens sont chassés de Beyrouth, nous tuons les financiers et propagandistes du sionisme.' Untitled, 11 Aug. 1982.
26. 'Les troupes colonialistes françaises (sont) en route pour une Troisième piquette?'
27. 'Après sa farce de Cancun, ses tournées africaines style parrain, le petit dictateur de l'Elysée a encore frappé. Le lancer du boomerang est un jeu dangereux.' 'Indochine, Algérie, ... Tchad?' (Indochina, Algeria... Chad?), 28 Aug. 1983.
28. 'From Oum-Chalouba to the Chouf, French aviation pursues its criminal enterprise.'
29. 'Comme dans toutes les colonies francophones, l'armée française s'installe en pays étranger et ose invoquer la légitime défense! Les Nazis employaient les mêmes arguments lorsqu'ils occupaient la France et frappaient les antifascistes de toutes nationalités.'
30. 'Traque les travailleurs immigrés en France et va faire ses sales guerres à des milliers de kilomètres de Paris.'
31. 'D'Oum-Chalouba au Chof l'aviation française poursuit son entreprise criminelle,' 26 Sept. 1983.
32. 'Oppressed from all countries: Get up, stand up.'
33. 'Tonton est là. Et la chanson des promesses, il la connaît. Rappelez-vous: de quoi a été suivi le discours de Cancun? - préparation franco-américain-sioniste de l'invasion du Liban - comédie du sommet de Versailles pour couvrir le déclenchement de cette invasion - débarquement de l'armée française à Beyrouth - invasion militaire du Tchad.' 'Opprimés de tous les pays: Get up, stand up!,' 29 Sept. 1983.
34. 'Va t'en guerre amateurs de croisades calmez-vous! Non aux Pershing et autres missiles "de croisière"! Si l'église catholique veut des bombes, elle en aura!...' 'Va t'en guerre amateurs de croisades calmez-vous!' (War-mongering lovers of crusades calm down!), 17 Nov. 1983.
35. 'New Caledonia, Class War.' The Kanaks are New Caledonia's aboriginal inhabitants. French settlers predominate on the southern half of the island while Kanaks are a majority in the north.
36. 'Les maires racistes, au nom d'un mystérieux "seuil de tolérance" (!), déclarent qu'il y a dans leurs communes trop de travailleurs immigrés... de couleur. Que dire de la situation en Nouvelle-Calédonie, où 50,000 blancs sont installés sans jamais avoir sollicité, auprès des 60,000 Canaques, le moindre PERMIS DE SEJOUR?'
37. 'Le petit dictateur qui a mal au Tchad.'
38. Literally, 'porteurs des valises' or 'porters'. The image is of 'fellow travellers'.
39. 'Des français ont apporté leur soutien au FLN algérien. Nous apportons le nôtre aux luttes populaires anti-colonialistes et anti-capitalistes.'
40. 'Ex-propriété de la mafia Rothschild.' 'Nouvelle-Calédonie Guerre de classes', 9 Dec. 1984.
41. 'Advice given from a class point of view to racists in France and elsewhere. Hands off my immigrant buddy, my Kanak, Chadian, Lebanese, Palestinian buddy', 13-14 April 1985.
42. '- couverture judiciaire des crimes racistes de la police en métropole
- licenciement et expulsion de nombreux travailleurs immigrés
- politique raciste de DUFOIX et de l'ONI (regroupement familial plus précaire que jamais, magouillés entre la régie Renault et l'ONI sur la nationalité de travailleurs d'origine africaine et donc remise en cause de l'aide au retour, etc. ...)
- ouverture des studios de la télévision française, sous protection policière, au nazi, tortionnaire d'Algériens LE PEN
- tenue de meetings de cette ordure raciste, là encore sous protection policière.'
43. 'La grande boucherie en Algérie.'
44. 'Politique raciste à l'égard des travailleurs immigrés', 'exactions sionistes contre les peuples Libanais et Palestinien', 'un des relais les plus virulents de la propagande raciste (sioniste, colonialiste, anti-immigrée) en France', 'Conseils donnés d'un point de vue de classe aux racistes de France et d'ailleurs: Touche pas à mon pote travailleur immigré, à mon pote kanak, tchadien, libanais, palestinien, etc. ...', 13-14 April 1985.
45. 'Machoro-Mandela: Same combat.'
46. 'Les Etats français et sud-africain sont prêts à tout pour assurer leur domination sur les peuples qu'ils exploitent. Ce sont des Etats en armes. L'Etat impérialiste français entretient sur le pied de guerre des dizaines de milliers de militaires en de nombreux points du globe.'
47. 'Le mépris de race et de classe détermine les conditions de survie quotidienne.
En France: taudis surpeuplés en ville, foyers-casernes de la Sonacotra et cités-dortoirs en banlieue servent de logement précaire pour les travailleurs immigrés.
En Afrique du Sud ce sont les townships pour les travailleurs noirs. Le principe est le même. C'est celui du GHETTO.' 'Machoro-Mandela: Même combat', 4 Sept. 1985, p.1.
48. 'Depuis l'arrivée au pouvoir de la social-démocratie française.'
49. 'C'est dans les ministères parisiens que commencent à mourir les Noirs des ghettos achevés par Pretoria.' Ibid., p.2.
50. 'Neither radio nor television for Le Pen.'
51. On France-Inter on 14 April and Antenne 2 on 16 April.
52. 'Bouc émissaire.'
53. 'La mort de jeunes immigrés en France est la résultante de ce qui est dit et de ce qui est fait'. 'Ni radio, ni télé pour Le Pen', 14 Oct. 1985.
54. 'Rien à signaler.'
55. 'Ne semble pas être un crime pour les humanistes sociaux-démocrates, puisque Badinter couvre l'affaire en refusant l'instruction'. 'Machoro-Moloiše: Morts pour le même combat' ('Machoro-Moloiše: Dead for the same combat'), 19 Oct. 1985.
56. 'Les capitalistes blancs fêtent leur liberté' ('The white capitalists celebrate their liberty'), 6 July 1986.
57. 'Le couple franco-américain sable le champagne avec le sang des noirs des townships de Pretoria ou de New York.'
58. 'Liberté pour les Rambo qui préparent la guerre de classe: accord OTAN-Thomson.
Liberté pour l'état capitaliste français à assassiner le peuple tchadien, canaque, antillais, corse, basque, grâce aux exécuteurs du G.I.G.N., du G.A.L. et à l'armée.
Liberté pour les 120 entreprises et banques françaises à collaborer avec l'état fasciste sud-africain.
Liberté pour les tortionnaires des guerres coloniales.
Liberté pour le fasciste Le Pen et ses porte-parole.
Liberté pour le criminel Duvalier.
Liberté pour le retour aux bonnes vieilles méthodes de Vichy: délation, renforcement de l'état policier, traque des immigrés.
Liberté pour les patrons à licencier encore plus, toujours plus.'
59. 'Comédie médiatique de la social-démocratie/R.P.R.' 'Les capitalistes blancs fêtent leur liberté.'
60. 'Legitimate defence'. ADn was by this time reduced to Frérot and Vecchio.
61. 'En France, pays des droits de l'homme blanc, on tue pour délit de faciès.' 'Légitime défense', 9 July 1986.
62. 'We have squeezed the lemon, we can throw away the skin.'
63. 'Nos armées ont demandé des visas auprès de quels pays pour coloniser et massacrer en Indochine, en Algérie, à Madagascar, ...?'
64. 'Nos bantoustans d'Afrique et des DOM-TOM constituent une réserve formidable de nouveaux

- esclaves. Déportés au pays de la "liberté". Exploités par le patronat. Tirés à vue par les Le Pen. Jetés dans les camps de rétention déjà inaugurés par le fasciste Mitterrand pendant la guerre d'Algérie. 'On a pressé le citron, on peut jeter la peau', 1 Nov. 1986.
65. 'L'apartheid ça commence en France' ('Apartheid begins in France'), 11 Nov. 1986.
66. 'L'Europe coloniale, qui s'est bâtie avec la sueur et les cadavres des noirs, des jaunes, des arabes, des indiens, a conçu au XVII^e siècle son rejeton: l'Afrique du sud. Les intérêts de classe des capitalistes blancs à piller et à massacrer sont les mêmes à Paris qu'à Pretoria.'
67. 'L'apartheid n'est qu'une face du fascisme.'
68. 'En souvenir de Pétain.'
69. 'Les médias cautionnent depuis l'Indochine les crimes contre l'humanité des capitalistes blancs.' 'L'apartheid ça commence en France'.
70. 'For a communist project' and 'Regarding American imperialism'.
71. See Ch.4 and *Le Monde* (25 Feb. 1987).
72. 'Les phantasmes des journaux pourris toujours avides de "complot international" et de "fils de bourgeois qui ont mal tourné".'
73. 'Le pouvoir socialiste mâtiné de quelques stalinien.' 'Pour un projet communiste', March 1982, p.5.
74. 'Capable d'impulser le mouvement révolutionnaire dans le contexte des sociétés capitalistes développées à pouvoir social-démocrate.' Ibid., p.6.
75. 'L'incapacité pour la classe ouvrière de dépasser par elle-même la conscience trade-unioniste, de se libérer des tentations du réformisme et de l'idéologie bourgeoise.' Ibid., p.10.
76. 'La spontanéité – ou ses formes actuelles: créativité, désir... les contacts personnels informels, l'appropriation de la vie quotidienne, le concret-pratique.' Ibid.
77. 'L'enlèvement social-démocrate, à la réaction de droite ou au "communisme" stalinien.' Ibid., p.11.
78. 'Au moment où l'ennemi de classe concentre toutes ses forces et où ses satellites incrustés dans le mouvement tentent de le casser ou de le détourner vers des voies de garage.' Ibid., p.12.
79. Imperialism and immigration, employment and housing and 'life' conditions.
80. 'Celle-ci, en effet, n'est pas une chose appropriable, mais un moment dans un processus.'
81. 'La violence est là, autolégitimée, car elle est la forme logique d'expression de ceux que les mécanismes du mode de production capitaliste abaissent et bafouent; et elle n'est pas seulement une réaction de désespoir comme le voudrait le misérabilisme, elle est action d'espoir qui vise au dépassement pratique révolutionnaire des rapports d'exploitation et de domination. Action directe et tous ceux qui partagent son raisonnement se situent à ce moment du processus de révolte.' Ibid., p.13.
82. 'Où les masses expérimentent les impasses de leur existence d'aujourd'hui et inventent les formes de refus qui seront à la base de l'organisation de demain.' Ibid.
83. 'Stade suprême du capitalisme décadent.' Ibid., p.17.
84. 'Dominant envers le Tiers-Monde, dominé par rapport à la C.E.E. et aux multinationales américaines.' Ibid., p.18.
85. 'Un système de déterminants centré sur le pouvoir technologique et la déculturation des dominés qui imposent un modèle de production et un modèle de consommation occidentalisés. Avec le transfert technologique, les pays en voie de développement s'endettent indéfiniment et acceptent le gouvernement des cadres et techniciens des pays développés, ou d'autochtones formés dans leurs universités, ce qui est parfois pire... si les normes culturelles occidentales ont réussi à écraser toute résistance, les classes populaires y accéderont, mais en sacrifiant leur vie entière à ce rêve: les habitants des bidonvilles d'Amérique Latine possèdent souvent ainsi T.V. et pick-up, voiture quelquefois; pendant ce temps, leurs enfants meurent de faim et les adolescents vont se prostituer dans les quartiers riches.' Ibid.
86. 'Sabordage du Système Monétaire International garant de leur puissance et de la stabilité de la domination des pays développés.' Ibid., p.19.
87. 'L'institution-clé du système est le Fonds Monétaire International, qui parmi tant d'autres hauts faits est l'inspirateur de la politique Pinochet ou de celle des généraux turcs issue du récent coup d'état militaire – "le virage libéral" – ou encore des conditions draconiennes qui ont amené le gouvernement italien à "assainir" la situation économique issue du "mai rampant" de 1969.' Ibid.
88. 'L'industrialisation qu'elle entraîne est toujours superficielle et tournée vers les métropoles, les obstacles au développement sont reconduits et n'est privilégiée que l'immédiate rentabilité.' Ibid., p.20.
89. 'Droit du travail chèrement acquis par ceux-ci, tout en se barrant la possibilité d'établir un programme politique qui soit fait pour les travailleurs.' Ibid., p.25.
90. 'Ce ne sont pas les socialistes qui vont y changer grand-chose puisque leurs maîtres-mots sont

- justement rationalisation et compétitivité.' Ibid., p.26.
91. 'Les capitalistes attaquent la vie des prolétaires à l'usine, ils les poursuivent jusque dans leurs quartiers en démolissant leur cadre d'habitat traditionnel et toutes les solidarités de classe qui y sont attachées.' Ibid., p.27.
92. 'La lutte des classes était matériellement inscrite dans le territoire et l'architecture, les bourgeois, leurs belles maisons, leurs grandes avenues à l'Ouest; à l'Est, les prolétaires, leur "habitat ancien", le dédale des petites rues où ils venaient se casser les dents.' Ibid.
93. Symbolically, Renault shut its Billancourt plant in 1990. The factory had been the centre of company growth and a birthplace of French (especially CGT) unionism.
94. 'Laissent pourrir des logements anciens parfaitement habitables, mais qui bien vite se révéleront naturellement, dégradés, insalubres et à démolir au nom de l'hygiène urbaine!' Ibid., p.27.
95. 'Le cynisme et le mépris envers les ouvriers, les paysans et les étudiants, et la distribution généreuse du pactole au sein de l'oligarchie financière et des grands commis de l'Etat.' Ibid., p.31.
96. 'L'économie reste entièrement dominée par les lois du capitalisme, et les nationalisations n'y changeront rien – le Régie Renault n'est-elle pas un des fers de lance du capitalisme français en voie d'internationalisation, une des promotrices des techniques de nationalisation – modernisation capitaliste du procès de travail, un centre d'expérimentation sociale pour le patronat?' Ibid., p.33.
97. 'Orientation qui ne vise ou ne mène qu'à la reconduction d'un mode de production qui depuis deux siècles écrase la vie de l'humanité et la voue au suicide nucléaire ou écologique.' Ibid.
98. 'Classe politique joue donc à plein la carte du changement dans la continuité et soyons certains que les calomnies ne manqueront pas de s'abattre sur ceux qui veulent promouvoir un projet communiste.' Ibid., p.37.
99. 'Une optique pro-situationniste en valorisant de la fête, du jeu, de la communauté, de la sexualité, etc.' Ibid., p.38.
100. Ibid.
101. See above, Ch.3.
102. 'L'enjeu actuel pour une organisation révolutionnaire est de savoir et de pouvoir faire converger toutes les luttes de base vers le renversement de l'ordre existant. Il est, pour nous, le projet communiste au sens où K. Marx disait: "Le communisme est le mouvement réel qui abolit l'état de choses existant." L'axe porteur du projet communiste sera alors celui de la transformation des illégalismes de masse en lutte armée.' Ibid., p.41.
103. 'Entraîner l'apparition d'illégalismes de masse et de les coordonner sous forme de contre-pouvoir.' Ibid.
104. 'Nouveau travail de masse, et pas seulement défense et repréaille, mais anticipation continue du mouvement.' Ibid., p.42.
105. 'L'élaboration du nouvel ordre économique international (NOIE).'
106. 'Nouveau régime d'accumulation dont la crise est la période de gestation.' 'Sur l'impérialisme américain', April 1982, p.3.
107. Ibid., p.5.
108. 'La rigidification des normes et des cadences, la collectivisation du processus de production qui estompe la relation entre salaire et effort individuel.' Ibid., p.9.
109. Ibid., p.10.
110. 'Transition au nouveau régime d'accumulation et au nouveau modèle de régulation mondiale.' Ibid., p.12.
111. 'L'assimilation de révoltes aussi violentes que les Black Panthers ou l'intégration par les industries de la contre-culture, la normalisation des déviations comme la drogue ou l'homosexualité laissent présumer que la gestion de la contestation, si elle ne s'attaque pas aux racines mêmes du pouvoir capitaliste, peut s'effectuer sans dommages majeurs.' Ibid.
112. 'Gendarmes de l'impérialisme U.S.'. 'Nous, combattants juifs d'Action direct...' ('We, the Jewish fighters in Action directe'), 1 Aug. 1982.
113. 'Deux policiers n'entrevoient pas la portée de leur réaction. Ils en portèrent entièrement les conséquences.' 'Mise au point No.2, La fusillade de l'avenue Trudaine, le 31.5.1983' ('Clarification Number 2, the Avenue Trudaine Shooting, 31 May, 1983').
114. 'La seule contradiction entre prolétariat internationale et bourgeoisie impérialiste.' 'Mise au point No.3, Sur la campagne politico-militaire des C.C.C. et la réponse propagandiste de l'état Belge' ('Clarification Number 3, Regarding the C.C.C. Political-Military Campaign and the Propagandistic Response of the Belgian State'), 31 May 1984.

- réflexion et de l'action contre les tenants et les aboutissants du mode de production capitaliste.' Ibid., pp.4–5.
194. 'Dénuée de toute raison objective dans la situation politique générale et particulière.' Ibid., p.5.
195. 'Devant aboutir à l'anéantissement de l'un des deux camps.' Ibid., p.6.
196. 'Avant-garde révolutionnaire'. Ibid., p.9.
197. Ibid., p.10.
198. 'L'élément avancé de la répression bourgeoise contre le mouvement ouvrier.' Ibid., p.11.
199. 'Les négociations après l'assassinat de Besse ont démontré dans leur durée (plus d'un mois) le manque évident de super-spécialistes de la restructuration.' Ibid.
200. 'Renault, vitrine sociale, mythe politique du consensus exemplaire, de la pacification par la consommation, de l'accès pour tous au "bonheur matériel", prit une dimension qui débordait largement de la simple construction de voitures, véhicules blindés ou robots, "l'exemplarité" n'étant qu'une des formes multiples de la volonté capitaliste de pacification et d'intégration du prolétariat au modèle capitaliste.' Ibid., p.12.
201. 'Depuis 45 toujours . . . an cœur de contradictions centrales du mode de production capitaliste.' Ibid., p.15.
202. 'Insérer brutalement la représentation du pouvoir ouvrier au cœur de leur stratégie; par là fragiliser l'ensemble de leur projet à travers ses différentes facettes, et construire la conscience nécessaire au développement de la politique prolétarienne.' Ibid.
203. 'La lutte des communistes comprend et insère la centralité de la lutte des ouvriers dans l'ensemble des luttes s'articulant contre la globalité du système d'exploitation et d'oppression.' Ibid., p.16.
204. 'Consciente des nécessités et des buts du mouvement général de la lutte des classes.' Ibid., p.18.
205. 'Dans la nouvelle philosophie et le journalisme libéré.' Ibid., p.19.
206. Ibid. On cultural change after May 1968, see Pascal Ory, *L'entre-deux Mai – Histoire culturelle de la France Mai 1968–Mai 1981* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1983); and Daniel Lindenberg, 'Un anniversaire interminable: 1968–1988', *La France en politique 1988* (Paris: Esprit Fayard Seuil, 1988).
207. See Ch.4: the groups were referring to creation of rapid-strike military units, revitalizing of the WEU, arms manufacture cooperation, West German *force de frappe* participation, US technological and R & D dominance, increased unemployment and a weakened welfare state.
208. It then murdered Audran and Besse, almost murdered Blandin and Brana, and attacked a US military base in Frankfurt.
209. See Appendices 5.2–5.5, pp.182–5.
210. See Appendix 5.2, Number of Attacks by *Action directe*.
211. See Appendix 5.3, Machine-gun Attacks.
212. See Appendix 5.4, Number of Bombings.
213. See Appendix 5.5, Number of Murders.
214. See Appendix 5.6, Political and Non-political Murders.
215. The Audran, Marsden and Besse assassinations; assaults on Brana and Blandin; and strikes on international organizations.
216. Sergei Nechaev, 'The Catechism of the Revolutionist', in Max Nomad, *Apostles of Revolution* (New York: Collier Books, 1961), p.230.

6 Conclusions

Justum enim est bellum quibus necessarium
(Every war is just if it is necessary.)

As this discussion of AD demonstrates 'terrorism' poses serious difficulties for analytical approaches to political violence that are based on legal-institutional frameworks and aim to produce theoretical generalizations. A focus on laws and institutions leads many analysts to view violent political factions as features of 'underdeveloped' or pre-modern political systems. Within such a framework, violent political factions are indeed anomalous and unpredictable. However, AD's case shows that revolutionary factions can develop in a stable Western system and that analyses must avoid a reflexive adoption of normative judgments about violence. Disciplines such as political science tend to accept uncritically the notion that representative institutions, market economies, public education, universalist ideologies and independent judiciaries are guarantees of peace, order and liberty. Analysts accordingly assume that violent direct action was anachronistic and call unsanctioned violence unnecessary, unreasonable and retrograde. A fear that factions would try to remake societies into pre-determined images thus displaced empirically based analyses of behaviour, ideologies, organizations and environment. Ironically, pre-modern political thought directly examined factional evidence. Several theorists even argued that direct action could be justified if it were used to resist tyranny. In contrast, terrorism oversteps the taxonomical bounds of contemporary political analysis. By focusing on violent methods rather than groups and using 'terrorism' to refer to groups or individuals with whom politicians, journalists and analysts simply disagree, many analyses generally perpetuate the confusion. One way around this problem might be development of a vocabulary to describe and differentiate low-level violence and the groups that employ it. This vocabulary could facilitate classification. At present, the term 'political terrorism' is vague, obscures context and encourages analogies between dissimilar groups, such as the South African ANC and Italian BR.

By focusing on one case, this analysis explains how a violent revolutionary

faction emerged in a stable Western setting. AD's motives were rational, if empirically misguided. The group argued that violent direct action was less odious than the prospect of abandoning revolutionary ideals. It referred itself to the revolutionary roots of French political culture and later regime changes to endow its violence with a specific significance. Traditionally, the French used violence to test incumbents and draw attention to discontent. After the mainstream left whole-heartedly embraced the Fifth Republic, AD leaders tried to exploit a traditional view that national regimes are 'historical' and subject to revision. However, its revolutionary campaign underestimated the regime, its level of public acceptance, and the stabilizing effects of European and international influences. In short, the revolutionary tradition was superseded by events. At the same time, AD drew its inspiration from French political history. Its revolutionary ideology was sustained by extreme-left traditions and the recent example of *gauchisme*. Altogether, these factors gave AD a peculiar character. In particular, despite condemnations of the Fifth Republic and French international ties and calls for a renewed left-wing *vocation*, AD's 'revolutionary' character was ambiguous.

Conclusions relating to theories of terrorism

Although terrorists in Western societies usually fail to pose a lethal menace to political systems, violent factions still emerge in certain circumstances. If these groups are as contextually conditioned as AD's case suggests, the analytic utility of 'terrorism' is not very high. AD shows that a group may fracture from within and recapitulate macro-political cleavages. The appearance of ADi and ADn demonstrates the value of an intensive examination of the significance, ends and dangers of violent political factions. It also lends credence to Furet and Reynaud's suggestion that extreme-left terrorists radically reinterpret the modern state.¹ They argue that ideology rather than violence distinguishes these organizations. In this light, AD's ideology is comprehensible in its context, but not a sign of crisis. The ideology shows the power of certain ideas in French political culture and thus the utility of ideological interpretation. In the French context, ideology is moreover explicitly central to political action. In point of fact, terrorism lends itself to symbolic analysis since its victims are 'only a representative of a population which may be very large, Western imperialists, or quite small, such as NATO generals. It is not always clear who is the target audience since sets or populations overlap . . . That there is always a wider target audience, however, is never in doubt.'² By examining AD's ideology, this discussion shows how ideas shaped, limited and oriented AD's acts. Specifically, AD's terrorism was circumscribed by concepts of historical

necessity and revolution. The above discussion also shows that AD's ideas were once widespread but were irrelevant by the 1980s, a context in which the 'rational' goal of communist revolution was unattainable.

Given the right circumstances, fringe groups might always use violent direct action in democratic settings regardless of the 'pre-modern' label attached to it. The mortal threat to officials, military leaders and business personnel is clearly a menace to democratic rights and obligations since it can provoke authoritarian responses. In many types of political systems, violence often appears in times of reform, when values and expectations are being challenged or revised. A case in point is that of Tsar Alexander II of Russia, a liberating, reforming absolutist whose social and political views were significantly in advance of his peers. He was murdered by the *Narodnaya Volya* on 1 March 1881.³ The *Narodnaya Volya*, a revolutionary anarchist organization, viewed administrative and judicial reforms and liberation of serfs as props for the autocracy. It believed that revolution was the only solution for mass misery. The immediate effect of the murder was to weaken the radical camp, but Alexander's death also ended reforms and so helped set the stage for 1917. Like *Narodnaya Volya*, AD formulated an extremist reaction to reformism. It also insisted that reform was not change and believed that violence would help foment revolution. Both groups sought absolute solutions to problems and placed enormous significance on individuals. The two also had a faith in action for its own sake that precluded free choice by the 'oppressed', who were in neither case attracted to revolution. OAS (*Organisation armée secrète*)⁴ attempts to murder de Gaulle illustrated a similar reaction although the motive in this case was opposition to decolonization. The extreme right in the French military had supported de Gaulle's *coup d'état* because it believed that he would prevent Algerian independence. Like Alexander II, de Gaulle could have opposed reform, but he was sensitive to domestic and international pressure for decolonization. Unable to stop decolonization institutionally or democratically, the extreme right tried to murder de Gaulle. Like AD, it turned to terrorism out of weakness and fear of marginalization. It was a traditionalist extreme right that attacked a modernizing, reformist and moderate right. In contrast, AD was a traditionalist extreme-left revolutionary faction that attacked a modernizing, reformist and moderate left.

Conclusions relating to French politics

AD's ideology was shaped within a universalist political culture. The group did not question this universalism, only modernizing reformism. It repeatedly cited the supposedly universal heritage of the 1789 revolution, the wartime resistance movement and the Algerian independence struggle.

AD diverged from mainstream-left views of 1789 and France's contemporary *vocation*. The latter views were repeatedly articulated in the 1980s by Mitterrand, who referred to a national civilizing 'mission' based on

France's faithfulness to the best of its traditions, the sense of the universal. This is a combat that I intend to take up, to which I invite all women and men who believe in their country's mission . . . France is above all a land, a history, a culture. This is our homeland. We know its considerable power to absorb and unite. Made of many alluvial deposits, it has been this way for a thousand years. The danger would be to change its nature.⁵

AD's concept of politics differed from that of the mainstream left in two important ways. First, it evaluated the political system on the basis of an extreme-left tradition of revolutionary direct action. Second, and ironically, its search for support made it receptive to new issues that anticipated later mainstream preoccupations. This ability is linked simultaneously to anticipate new wishes and to express anachronism to the evolution of post-1960s French political culture. AD appeared as old divisions declined and a new political vocabulary based on *alternance*, *cohabitation* and *ouverture* emerged. By the 1980s, the socialist and nationalist themes that de Gaulle once used to polarize Fifth Republic politics had dramatically declined. In their place, themes such as European integration, Third World development, poverty, racism, immigration and the social power of money dominated political discourse in the late 1980s. The FN and AD were the first political organizations to seize on these issues as political trademarks. AD's programme thus had potential appeal, but its refusal to forsake violent revolutionary direct action consigned it to the fringe. The group was ultimately unable to resolve the contradiction of being simultaneously in advance of and behind the mainstream. The rest of the extreme left dropped extra-parliamentarianism and fielded electoral candidates in the 1970s. By the mid-1980s, its political protest role was taken up by the FN, which built its strength on denouncing political cliques and corruption, and by concentrating on local issues. AD's development paralleled and juxtaposed that of the FN. The former was equally sensitive to political change. Both organizations voiced fear of marginalization, suspicion of politicians, xenophobia and anti-Americanism. AD's 1979–80 condemnation of *le patronat*, African policy, real-estate speculation and the military expressed widespread extreme-left views. In addition, AD's charge that France was reintegrated into NATO and the Western military industry was accurate. France was a leading world arms dealer in the 1980s. Its military forces participated in NATO manoeuvres.⁶ European and US arms manufacturers agreed to design and construct jointly advanced military

equipment, including airborne radar and 'clever' shells that hunt targets, and to share costs and technological spin-offs.⁷ It is significant that AD was arrested even as government policies partly confirmed its charge that the mainstream left had betrayed national traditions of independent foreign and defence policies.⁸ The shift was further seen in the strong French support for US policy in the Gulf War.

The nature of Action directe

AD believed that PS reformism was extremist because it removed revolution from political discussion. The group thought that reformism had contaminated French socialism. However, AD's struggle subsequently centred on affirming revolutionary ideals rather than actually seizing power. It hoped to provoke a revolutionary movement that would transform French society. Neither ADn nor ADi saw themselves as alternative elites. ADi's assassinations were motivated by its convictions that individual murders would vindicate errors and alter history. The sacrifice of 'imperialists' was intended to heighten anti-capitalist and class antagonism. Despite fundamental similarities, ADi and ADn had distinct personalities and orientations. ADn's violence was an audacious protest that aimed to humiliate the establishment. ADn wanted to embody hope that exploitation would end and authentic social equality could be established. ADi's violence was more ideologically elaborated. For one thing, it explicitly justified ritual human sacrifice. By advocating the defeat of 'imperialist projects', ADi implicitly acknowledged that global factors could not be ignored. It recognized that new influences were at work on French political culture and tacitly accepted the idea that national 'exceptionalism' had diminished. Its call for 'anti-capitalist' unity and violence were accordingly articulated as supposed springboards for revolutionary consciousness.⁹

The explanation for AD's turn from symbolic attacks to assassination lies in its ideological evolution. After 1984, political murders became central to ADi's activities. ADn continued to attack material targets and only killed in 'self-defence'. ADn, but not ADi, was apparently fascinated by crime. ADn's 1989 trial revealed that it was strongly anti-Semitic. ADi, in contrast, claimed that it was anti-Zionist, but not anti-Semitic.¹⁰ ADi's early focus on France gradually declined in favour of an international outlook, in tandem with a shift in overall French political orientations. After 1982, ADi began to attack international organizations and individuals associated with them. Believing that a battle against international 'imperialism' was the best revolutionary strategy in the era of Cruise missiles and SDI, it increasingly targeted NATO. ADn all the while held a

franco-français ('true-blue French') orientation. It focused on domestic issues and referred its acts to global trends insofar as they related to national events. The national-international split between the two organizations might be a pattern worth examining in relation to groups such as the BR. Both ADs recognized the emergence of a new global order, but evaluated its impact differently. ADi decided to attack the 'heart of the military-industrial complex' in alliance with the RAF and concentrated on three types of targets: (1) the French state (ministries of industry and defence); (2) international organizations (World Bank, IMF, *Institut Atlantique*, ESA and WEU); and (3) arms manufacturers Dassault, Messier-Hispano-Bugatti and SIAR).

After 1985, ADi also targeted international organizations and arms manufacturers¹¹ and tried to assassinate military and business personnel.¹² Its orientations shifted after it began to coordinate attacks with foreign groups. The original AD was influenced by the BR view¹³ that terrorism would increase the revolutionary role of the proletariat. For a time, both the BR and RAF influenced AD due to common concerns based on

The symbol of the human condition in contemporary society; they reduce politics to a conflict by challenging any idea of compromise; they reject any legitimacy for the liberal state while defending a political position that claims to go beyond defence of the creativity of productive individuals; lastly, and above all, the final goal (emancipation of 'proletarian power') tends to disappear before the medium of guerrilla warfare, to the point of merging with it: for U. Meinhoff, engagement in guerrilla warfare freed subjectivity; for the Red Brigades, the organization of workers' power becomes blended with the organization of armed struggle.¹⁴

ADi embraced the RAF view that violence could foment working class awareness about the state and the need for Third World revolution in 1982-84. The post-1982 split ironically reflected French society despite AD's pretentious claim to be the clarion of West European revolution. A social movement is a necessity for all revolutionary organizations. Its failure to win support had previously pushed ADi to re-examine its goals and political conditions in *Pour un projet communiste* and *Sur l'impérialisme américain*. BR influence then further declined after Rizzato's death and Spano's arrest.

Cipriani's fluent German and Rouillan and Ménigon's friendship with CCC leader Carette facilitated RAF influence. Although targets shifted and the two groups agreed over shared ends, the RAF did not 'take over' ADi. The latter continued to follow a French agenda, but increasingly saw domestic issues from a global perspective after 1985. Its victims

reflected the shift. Audran and Blandin worked in the French arms trade, the former in an international division of the public sector, the latter in the army. Besse and Brana were important in national institutions that were traditional extreme-left targets and in a process of adaptation to new world market conditions.¹⁵ Renault in particular was central to PCF, CGT, extreme-left and *gauchiste* theories of the French working class. However, AD's obsession with Renault was pathetic and tragic. Renault workers were indifferent to AD's revolutionary appeals and claim to be an *avant-garde*. The group's posturing ultimately caricatured the ideal of an enlightened tutelage of popular unrest by a revolutionary elite. AD seriously miscalculated the political impact that *gauchiste* 'popular forces' had in 1968. It ignored the fact that *gauchisme* was not a mass movement, but had tried to manipulate one, and that its projected worker-student alliance was a complete failure.¹⁶ AD also ignored the GP rejection of terrorism. The former's focus on 'revolutionary cadres' said more about its needs than any risk it might pose to society. After its effort to connect to the 'lumpen-proletariat' failed in 1979-80, AD developed a new strategy, but remained what could be termed a variety of hopelessly marginal '*lumpen-gauchisme*'.

ADi and ADn shared the anti-military focus of previous extreme-left groups like the LCR. The theme explains the motives behind AD's post-1982 attacks on *consensus*, *alternance*, *cohabitation* and former radicals working in the system. In other areas, the two groups differed from one another. ADi's self-appointed 'project' was to reconstitute the proletariat and use the Third World as a motor for revolutionary change. EEC integration and fear of multinational corporations led it to attack international organizations, business and the military.¹⁷ These targets and the use of assassination set ADi apart from the original AD. ADn was an 'extreme-left protest' faction. It struck symbols that it believed would arouse popular protest: racism; Le Pen; and New Caledonia.¹⁸ Its anti-militarism was less programmatic and more attitudinal than that of ADi. ADi articulated more theoretically elaborate anti-military and anti-international themes based on opposition to European integration and international economic, technological, scientific and political coordination. Shortly before being completely dismantled, ADi began to attack French economic restructuring. Both groups illustrated how anti-Americanism remained important for the French extreme-left fringe in the 1980s. However, they also demonstrated that this sentiment could not be used to arouse popular protest. Despite this, ADi proclaimed a 'new international' against US dominance.¹⁹ Both ADi and ADn had motives that led to continued struggle against impossible odds. Their fringe status undoubtedly hardened determination into dogmatism and made the two groups similar to the medieval millenarian groups described by Norman Cohn. Like

these groups, AD was motivated by a vision of collective, terrestrial, imminent, total, miraculous salvation.²⁰ A crucial difference between Cohn's typology and AD was the latter's secular, materialist and nihilist character. AD's historical materialism emphasized the working class. It advocated the violent destruction of political, economic and social institutions from the point of view of nihilist communism. The homogenizing tendencies in both nihilism and historical materialism led AD radically to oppose the rise of consensus politics in the Fifth Republic.

NOTES

1. See *Terrorisme et démocratie* (Paris: Fayard, 1985).
2. Letter from Dr Kenneth Robertson, University of Reading, 8 Aug. 1989.
3. People's Will.
4. Secret Armed Organization.
5. 'Je ne doute pas . . . de la fidélité de la France au meilleur de ses traditions, le sens de l'universel. C'est un combat que j'entends assumer, auquel j'invite celles et ceux qui croient en la mission de leur pays . . . La France, c'est avant tout un sol, une histoire, une culture. Là est notre patrie. On connaît son formidable pouvoir d'absorption, d'unité. Faite de multiples alluvions, elle est ainsi depuis mille ans. Le danger serait pour elle de changer de nature.' 'Un entretien avec M. François Mitterrand' (*Le Monde*, 20 June 1990). As mentioned above, the PS developed a programme to make France the cultural centre of Europe. By 2000, the renovated Louvre will be the world's largest museum. A new national library will greatly improve research facilities. The government financed international French language television and a large French-language university in London. High-speed rail transport will place Paris at the centre of cultural and commercial exchange.
6. For example, from 19 September to 14 October 1986, five Mirage F-1 fighters, four Alpha-Jet support jets, 12 Jaguar fighter-bombers, the aircraft carrier *Foch*, frigates *Duquesne* and *Georges-Leygues*, a military oil supply ship and maritime patrol plane took part in NATO manoeuvres.
7. On 19 November 1986, about 30 weapons systems were identified for potential collaboration. British Marconi, Italian Selenia-Elsag SpA and French Thomson-Brandt SA agreed to develop a radar system for NATO frigates. Canadair, West German Dornier GmbH and French SAT built a pilotless drone. British Westland PLC and Italian Agusta SpA developed a naval helicopter (*Globe & Mail*, 19 Nov. 1986). Confirming the benefits of cooperation with NATO, a French arms show in 1990 featured new military technologies. The focus responded to declining global tension by targeting the modernization of existing equipment.
8. In February 1987, the French defence ministry considered purchase of US-designed AWACS system. On 20 February (the day before Rouillan, Ménigon, Aubron and Cipriani's arrest), foreign minister Jean-Bernard Raimond announced that France would produce chemical weapons and continue South Pacific nuclear tests. The Chirac government 'decided to acquire a limited and purely dissuasive capability in chemical arms' as part of a five-year defence programme and rejected a moratorium on chemical weapons development. When the USSR agreed to inspection of its chemical weapons on 17 February Raimond said destroying stockpiles over ten years would create an imbalance between states with large and small quantities. France advocated proportional elimination of chemical weapons.
9. ADi claimed that 'only by simultaneously developing the force of class and its victories may we develop the consciousness needed to organize other victories'. See above, Ch.5.
10. These themes burst onto the political scene after Le Pen made openly anti-Semitic remarks in 1989 and a Jewish cemetery in Carpentras was desecrated in May 1990.
11. For example, the IMF, OECD, TRT and SAT.

12. Audran, Blandin, Brana and Besse.
13. For the BR in the 1970s, see 'Anatomy of Autonomy', by Bifo, in *Semiotext(E)*, Vol.III, No.3 (1980), p.161.
14. 'Le symbole de la condition humaine dans la société contemporaine; ils réduisent la politique au conflit tout en récusant toute idée de compromis; ils refusent toute légitimité à l'État libéral tout en défendant une politique qui prétend aller au-delà de la défense de la créativité des individus producteurs; enfin et surtout, le but final (l'émancipation ou le "pouvoir prolétarien") tend à disparaître devant ce moyen qu'était la "guérilla", jusqu'à se confondre avec lui: pour U. Meinhof, l'engagement dans la guérilla libérait la subjectivité; pour les Brigadistes, l'organisation du pouvoir ouvrier se confond désormais avec l'organisation de la lutte armée.' Philippe Raynaud, 'Les origines intellectuelles du terrorisme', *Terrorisme et démocratie*, p.126.
15. Renault, the CNPF and Thomson.
16. See Ch.3.
17. See Appendix 6.1.
18. See Appendix 6.2.
19. ADi's most lethal attacks occurred at the same time that France rejected Soviet demands to count its arsenal along with the West, launched a multi-warhead nuclear submarine, and put in place a new rapid action force that enhanced its military decision-making role.
20. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p.15.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 CHRONOLOGY OF ACTION DIRECTE, 1979-90

1979

- 18 March – machine-gun attack on Minister of Cooperation by Rouillan and Ménigon.
- 25 March – Schleicher imprisoned.
- 1 May – machine-gun attack on CNPF headquarters by Olivier's group.
- 28 August – theft of 16 million francs from Condé-sur-L'Escaut (Nord) tax collection office by Italian, Spanish and French militants believed to belong to AD.
- 15 September
 - explosion in annexe of Ministry of Labour and Participation.
 - two bombs dismantled near Ministry of Health.
- 16 September
 - bomb attack on SONACOTRA.
 - machine-gun attack on façade of Ministry of Labour and Participation.
- First AD claim of responsibility on 17 September 1979.
- 24 September – attack on building housing *Caisse professionnelle de prévoyance des salariés* and *Délégation régionale pour l'emploi d'Ile-de-France*.

1980

- 1 February – Schleicher condemned to three years' imprisonment and fined 1,000 francs for possessing arms, explosives and forged documents.
- 3-5 February – two failed attacks on *Direction régionale du travail et de la main-d'œuvre*.
- 10 February – bombing of *Société immobilière de construction de Paris*.
- 10 March – bomb seriously damaged SEMIREP offices.
- 15 March – bombing of DST. AD tracts found on site.
- 18 March – machine-gun attack on Ministry of Co-operation by Rouillan and Ménigon.

28 March

- bombing of GIGN.
- round-up of AD members, including several Italians connected to Aldo Moro's murder.

30 March – Toulouse police headquarters attacked in retaliation for arrests.

4 April – 15 AD members indicted before the *Cour de sûreté de l'Etat*.

5–6 April – Philips Data Systems computers in Toulouse attacked without visible destruction.

9 April – fire set in Toulouse CII Honeywell offices by AD's *Clodo* group.

14 April – failed attack on Toulouse Palais de Justice.

15 April

- bazooka and explosives attacks on Ministry of Transport and Ministry annexes.
- bazooka attack on the *Délégation à la sécurité routière*.

9 June – arson damages building at the Université Rennes-I.

12 June – bombing at Orly-Ouest air terminal injures seven cleaning personnel.

August – AD raids police station and captures passports, identity cards and material for producing identification.

8 August – robbery of BNP by AD Paris.

28 August – hold-up on avenue Bosquet, Paris.

13 September – Ménigon and Rouillan captured in rue Pergolèse police ambush.

19 September – machine-gun attack on *Ecole militaire*.

29 October – Olivier and Frérot steal 90,000 francs from BNP in Caluire (Rhône) and kill security guard Henri Delrieu.

1981

30 March – AD Lyon robs Lyon *Crédit lyonnais*. Frérot brutalizes a bank employee.

15 April – robbery of Place des Ternes BNP in Paris. A policeman is killed.

24 April – AD Lyon robs another Lyon BNP.

11–12 May – bomb alert on TGV attributed to AD.

21 June – ADn robs Lyon *Crédit du nord*. An employee is stabbed. AD Lyon escaped with 400,000 francs.

15 July – Schleicher freed from prison, benefiting from PS government amnesty.

5 August – Rouillan amnestied.

6 August – PS First Secretary Jospin's automobile, stolen from a car park near Saint-Sulpice on 13 July, is recovered. AD tells *Libération* it is responsible.

29 August – attack on Intercontinental Hotel injures ten people. Attack undertaken to pressure authorities to free imprisoned militants.

17 September – Ménigon freed after 20-day hunger-strike and disappears.

22 September – *anti-goinfretrie* (anti-piggery) attack on *La Tour d'Argent* restaurant to draw attention to imprisoned militants. Twenty people vandalize entry and leave behind tracts entitled '*Nous*'.

23 September – '*Badinter*' (*Bombeurs anonymes pour la défense des incarcérés très excités par Robery*) attack Toulouse Palais de Justice.

24 September – '*Nous*' set fire to annexe of *Comité de probation* in Paris and attack statue of Saint-Louis in Vincennes.

26 September – '*Germain*' attacks food store handling Fauchon products and paints stock. A telegram to AFP links incident to those above.

29–30 September – *Comité unitaire de défense des prisonniers politiques* occupies *Quotidien de Paris* editorial offices, demanding dedication of a page in the next morning's edition to hunger-strikers.

30 September – 50 people occupy AFP offices and falsify news item about the death of AD hunger-striker.

5 October – 40 militants of *Comité Riposte à la répression en Algérie* occupy *Le Monde* offices.

6 October – AD group occupies set of television station FR3 programme on Anwar Sadat (assassinated that day).

3 November – AD Lyon shoot-out with police during robbery of a *Société lyonnaise* kills police brigadier Guy Hubert. ADn escapes with 40,000 francs.

3 December – Rouillan participates in squatter occupation of vacant building as member of *Association des ouvriers-paysans du 18ème arrondissement*.

7 December – AD Lyon again robs a Lyon *Crédit lyonnais*. Frérot again brutalizes a bank employee.

10 December – AD Lyon robs a Lyon BNP. Bank manager is stabbed.

23 December – butane gas cartridge explosions hit 'symbols' of consumerism: Rolls Royce, Le Train Bleu (toy shop), Brasserie Bofinger and Burberrys (clothes shop).

1982

19 January – AD Lyon robs a *Société lyonnaise* branch.

18 February – AD Lyon robs another *Société lyonnaise* branch.

13 March – Lebanese painter Chahine, a member of AD's '*mouvance*', murdered by Schleicher. Chahine was an informer for the RG.

31 March – machine-gun attack on Israeli Defence Ministry commercial mission in Paris.

8 April – discovery of AD arms depot. A pistol-machine-gun used in the 31 March attack on Israeli commercial mission proves links to FARL.

- 27 May – Ménigon, in the company of Belgian CCC leader Carette, is severely injured in car accident. Tracts protesting against the Versailles summit found in the car.
- 28 May
- gunshots fired at Paris Bank of America by AD Lyon.
 - 25 AD sympathizers questioned in Paris and Grenoble after a tract is distributed calling for armed protest against US President Reagan's visit to France.
- 3 June – European headquarters of World Bank and Paris IMF offices hit by six-kilogram bomb planted by *Unité combattante Lahouari-Farid Benchellal*.
- 4–5 June – explosion at *Ecole américaine* in St Cloud several days after the Paris American Legion branch received a telephone bomb threat.
- 5 July – during AD Lyon robbery of a bank in Saint-Chamond (Loire), Frérot shoots a cashier in the temple.
- 20 July – attack on Bank Leumi and Ganco (an Israeli company) in Paris.
- August – Olivier splits from Rouillan and Ménigon, creating AD's 'national' and 'international' wings.
- 1 August – unoccupied Israeli diplomatic car machine-gunned by *Unité combattante Marcel Rayman*.
- 7 August – explosion at Diskount Bank (subsidiary of former Rothschild *Européenne des Banques*) by *Unité combattante Marcel Rayman*.
- 8 August – explosion at Jewish-owned Nemor company supply store by *Unité combattante Lahouari-Farid Benchellal*.
- 11 August – bombing of Citrus GMBI of Israel severely injures a woman.
- 17 August – Paris court refuses to release Hamami (arrested 8 April). After he confirms three AD attacks in a *Libération* interview, a search warrant is issued for Rouillan.
- 18 August – Mitterrand bans AD as part of counter-terrorist strategy after rue des Rosiers attack.
- 19–20 August – explosion seriously damages offices of extreme-right monthly *Minute*.
- 21 August – FARL bomb explodes under car of a US embassy commercial adviser, killing two police specialists who were trying to dismantle it.
- September – one and a half tons of explosives found at remote rural commune in Ardèche.
- 17 September – 19 AD activists questioned after discovery of a car containing arms and explosives. Former GARI militants Camillieri, Grosmougin and Chibaud imprisoned.
- 13 October – Oriach and Christian arrested and documents seized, including about 40 file-cards about Jewish businesses in Paris.
- 20 October – AD militant Moreau escapes police as they try to question him.

1983

- April – *Musée de la Légion d'honneur* ransacked to pressure for liberation of Oriach.
- 31 May – policemen killed on Avenue Trudaine as they attempt to check papers of six AD militants. Three suspects, Hamami, Argano and Forina, are never found.
- 15 June – AD members Camillieri, Grosmougin, Magron, Chibaud and Moreau (*in absentia*) sentenced for possession and transportation of arms and explosives.
- 29 July – ADn robs Saint-Etienne bank. Client is shot in the stomach by Frérot.
- 30 July – robbery of jewellery store 'Aldebert' by Ménigon and Rouillan.
- 28 August – attacks on national headquarters of PS and Ministry of Defence.
- 25 September – attack on *Services techniques de construction navale*. No group claims responsibility but AD suspected.
- 26 September – ADn bomb attack on *Centre documentation des carrières de la Marine nationale*.
- 29 September – bombing of *Cercle militaire*.
- 14 October – Italian extreme-left and COLP member Rizzato killed in robbery. Early confirmation of AD's Euro-terrorist links.
- 17 November – bomb attacks on *Maison diocésaine* and Seventh-Day Adventist church.
- 6 December – AD members Moriset and Jacquet sentenced to ten and seven years in prison for attempted robbery.

1984

- 29 January – arms manufacturer Panhard-Lavessor bombed. Company constructs light machine-gun AML and troop transport VAB sent to Chad.
- 2 February – arrest of Italian extreme-leftist Spano. BR and FARL murder American General Leamon Hunt, chief of Sinai multinational force, in Rome.
- 4 February – Rouillan and Ménigon escape police drag-net in Paris. Incident precipitates ADi move to a farm at Le Gué Girault at Vitry-aux-Loges, near Orléans.
- 13 March – Ménigon and Rouillan take Belgian police inspector hostage and escape capture. Confirms use of Belgium as a refuge.
- 27 March – police general Guy Delfosse murdered in hold-up of Lyon BNP by Olivier, Joëlle Crépet and Max Frérot.

- 12 July – bombing of *Institut Atlantique des Affaires Internationales* by *Commando Ciro Rizzato*.
- 13 July
- bombing of Ministry of Defence *Centre de recherches et de constructions navales* by the *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.
 - Schleicher and Halfen brothers charged with Avenue Trudaine murder.
- 14 July – bombing of Ministry of Industry building containing the offices of NATO pipeline management by *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.
- 2 August – bombing of *Agence spatiale européenne* by *Commando Ciro Rizzato*.
- 23 August – failed car-bomb attack on *Union de l'Europe Occidentale*. Ménigon phones to warn of explosion. Police tow away the car for violating traffic laws.
- 28 August – bomb attacks on headquarters of PS and Ministry of Defence.
- 15 September – Schleicher, Halfen brothers, Besse and Spano begin hunger-strike to protest against isolation and lack of visiting rights.
- 2 October – CCC bomb attack on Litton Business International.
- 4 October – 635 prisoners at Fleury refuse to eat in solidarity with AD hunger-strikers and to draw attention to prison conditions.
- 10 October – ADn member Émile Ballandras arrested in hold-up and hostage incident in Lyon.
- 20 October – bombing of Messier-Hispano-Bugatti computer services by *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.
- 21 October – bombing of company *Marcel-Dassault*.
- 24 October – four of five AD hunger-strikers end their protest after family delegation receives permission to visit them from courts.
- 25 November – Portuguese extreme-left Popular Forces of 25 April fires mortars at US embassy in Lisbon.
- 9 December
- attack on RPR offices by ADn *Commando Hienghène*.
 - Portuguese extreme-left Popular Forces of 25 April fires mortar at NATO command post in suburban Lisbon.
- 10 December – attack on Elf-Aquitaine offices by *Commando Hienghène*.
- 18 December – failed RAF bomb attack on NATO military college in West Germany. Investigators discover explosives from stockpile stolen in Belgium. ADi used same stockpile to attack UEO. First evidence of ADi-RAF alliance.

1985

- 15 January
- AD and RAF announce guerrilla action against NATO and Franco-German cooperation.

- CCC bombs US Army social centre in Brussels, slightly injuring American guard and causing \$500,000 damage.
- 19 January – Schleicher begins hunger-strike to support West German terrorist prisoners.
- 25 January – assassination of Audran by *Commando Elisabeth-von-Dick*.
- 28 January – Portuguese extreme-left Popular Forces of 25 April fire mortars at three NATO frigates in Lisbon harbour.
- 1 February
- Ernst Zimmerman assassinated by RAF *Patrick O'Hara Commando*.
 - Popular Forces of 25 April bomb 18 cars belonging to West German military personnel in Beja, Portugal to demand closure and dismantlement of base.
- 13 April – explosions at Paris offices of Israeli Bank Leumi and ONI by *Unité combattante Sana Mheidli*.
- 14 April – *Minute* offices bombed by *Unité combattante Sana Mheidli*.
- 27 April – explosion at Paris IMF headquarters by *Unité combattante Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.
- 30 April – explosions at TRT and SAT set by *Unité combattante Ciro Rizzato*.
- 1 May – CCC bombs FEB headquarters in Brussels. Two firemen killed after police 'forget' to warn of explosion.
- 26 June
- ADi *Unité combattante Antonio Lo Musico* fires shots at car of Henri Blandin.
 - Judge Bruguière protests to Algerian embassy over lack of cooperation in search for Hamami.
- 4 July – RAF member Ingrid Barabass arrested in Frankfurt. She was spotted in Paris shortly before Audran's assassination.
- 5 July – police seize material at *Radio-Mouvance*, which sympathized with extreme-left and Third World movements and defended AD ideas on air.
- 26 July – Algerian government says it does not oppose Bruguière's investigation for Hamami case in Algeria.
- 8 August – ADi-RAF *Commando George Jackson* bombs US air force base in Frankfurt, West Germany. Two Americans killed and 11 injured.
- 4 September – attacks on businesses accused of investing in South Africa: ATIC; Aluminium-Pechiney; Renault; and Spie-Batignolles.
- 9 September – Bruguière goes to Algeria to investigate Hamami's role in Avenue Trudaine shooting.
- 17 September – Bruguière finds no trace of Hamami in Algeria.
- 14 October – explosions at the *Maison de la Radio* and *Antenne-2*.
- 17 October – explosion at the *Haute Autorité de l'Audiotvisuel* by *Commando Ahmed-Moulay* after Le Pen interview on Antenne 2's 'L'heure de vérité'.

- 19 October – explosions at airline UTA and shipping firm *Chargeurs Réunis*, active in South Africa, by *Commando B. Moloise*.
- 20 October – Meyer Azeroual, AD founder and 'financier', arrested in Paris.
- 7 December – two attacks on NATO pipeline network. The control room for military oil pipeline in Belgium and Versailles building of managers of NATO pipelines, *Agence centre-Europe d'exploitation*, bombed.
- 15 December – Belgian police arrest CCC members. Rouillan and Ménigon seen speeding through a Brussels police blockade.
- 20 December – ADn blows up Lyon *Caisse d'épargne* but cannot find money.

1986

- 24 January – BW, which resembles AD, first appears in attack on CIRPO.
- 4 March – AD robbery of *Banque de France* in Niort.
- 27 March – ADi robs a *Société générale* in Orléans.
- 28 March – ADn leader Olivier and Bernard Blanc arrested. Documents (weighing 150 kilograms) seized.
- 30 March – Crépet arrested in Saint-Etienne as she tries to burn and flush a bundle of papers down a lavatory. Discovery of ADn archives.
- 6 April – BW attacks *Parti ouvrier européen* (POE) offices.
- 9–10 April – Lisbon *Air France* offices in Lisbon bombed. Telephone threat against French consul and *Institut français*.
- 15 April – shots fired by *Commando Christos Kassimis* at CNPF Vice-President Guy Brana.
- 16 April – 40 extreme-left militants questioned about attack on Brana.
- 18 April – public prosecutor opens inquiry on six people after Brana attack.
- 23 April – police search *Libération* offices. Journalist Millet, who interviewed Rouillan in 1982, questioned and held. *VSD* journalist Marc Francelet also arrested.
- 25 April – Black and Decker France Director Marston murdered by Frérot.
- 26 April – American Express and Control Data offices in Lyon bombed by Frérot.
- 9 May – CCC members Carette, Chevolet, Sassoye and Vandergeerde begin hunger-strike to protest against prison isolation cells and demand the right to meet, end to censure of correspondence and right to wear civilian clothes.
- 16 May – ADi *Commandos Christos Kassimis* and *José Kepa Crespo Gallende* attack Interpol. Security guard slightly injured.
- 24 May – explosion in front of police commissariat in Paris *11è arrondissement*. 'Insécurité, mort aux flics' written on nearby wall.
- 11 June – two Americans and two Irish citizens arrested smuggling arms

- from Le Havre to Ireland in a camping vehicle shipped from Los Angeles for INLA.
- 12 June – arrest of Alain Pojolat, suspected of links to AD.
- 16 June – Pascale Turin imprisoned in Lyon. She had sheltered AD members and concealed stolen equipment and goods.
- 22 June – BW attacks Rothmans cigarette company offices.
- 3 July – robbery of *Banque de France* in Saint-Nazaire.
- 6 July – explosions at Thomson computer unit and *Air liquide*.
- 7 July – arrest of ADn member Succab.
- 9 July
 - bomb by ADn *Commando Loïc Lefevre* devastates BRB temporary offices. Division inspector Basdevant killed, four policemen seriously wounded and 20 others injured.
 - Siemens co-director Beckerts and chauffeur killed by bomb set by RAF *Commando Maria Cagol* in Munich.
- 21 July – ADi explodes 12-kilogram bomb at OECD.
- 9 September – arrest of ADn members Lahy and Augay in Lyon.
- 19 September–14 October – France participates in NATO military manoeuvres.
- 24 September – Oriach and five others questioned after 9 September FARL attack.
- 4 October – four armed men claiming to belong to AD steal detonators and coils of safety fuse from building site in Saint-Germain de Joux (Ain).
- 10 October – Gerald von Braummuell assassinated by RAF commando West European Revolutionary Front.
- 29 October – Eket, Guadeloupean recruited into ADn by Succab, arrested in Paris.
- 1 November – explosions at state-owned *Air Minerve* and the ONI to protest against Chirac government policy of expelling immigrants.
- 11 November – explosions at headquarters of Peugeot, Total and Pechiney-Ugine-Kuhlmann as South African President Botha begins private visit in France.
- 17 November – Besse shot by *Commando Pierre-Overney*.
- 19 November – European and US arms manufacturers agree to joint design and construction of advanced military equipment.
- December – Gilbert Vecchi, who aided bombing of Paris BRB headquarters, arrested.
- 3 December – trial of Schleicher and Halfen brothers for Avenue Trudaine shooting. Defendants force adjournment by threatening court and jury.
- 15 December – Alain Peyrefitte's car bombed. Chauffeur Serge Langer killed.

1987

- 5 January – police thwart assassination attempt on Bruguière. Live grenade on the end of a nylon string in front of his apartment door dismantled.
- 12 February – ADi claims responsibility for assassinating Besse.
- 20 February – France announces production of chemical weapons and continues nuclear blasts in South Pacific.
- 21 February – Rouillan, Cipriani, Ménigon and Aubron arrested on Pont-aux-Dions farm in Vitry-aux-Loges (Loiret).
- 23 February – RPR secretary-general Toubon criticizes PS 'laxisme' in terrorism and states that Besse and Audran would be alive if not for the 1981 amnesty.
- 25 February – ADi leaders charged.
- 5 March – Aubron and Ménigon charged with Besse murder.
- 18 March – police discover AD hide-out in *Tour Montparnasse* containing 11 kilograms of explosives.
- 20 March – Italian air force general Licio Giorgieri shot by *Union des communistes combattants*.
- 30 March – ADi leaders charged with Audran murder.
- 28 May – anti-terrorist summit of nine Western nations in Paris.
- 13 June – seven professional magistrates deliberating over Avenue Trudaine shooting condemn Schleicher to life-imprisonment, Nicolas Halfen to ten years and acquit Claude Halfen.
- 19 June – BW attacks offices of *Société générale des Techniques industrielles* (SGTI), French branch of Union Carbide.
- 27 November
- Frérot arrested in Lyon.
 - Oriach charged with *association de malfaiteurs en relation avec une entreprise terroriste* and imprisoned.
- 1 December – Rouillan, Cipriani, Schleicher, Aubron and Ménigon began hunger-strike to demand political prisoner status and closing of re-inforced isolation cells.
- 2 December – Helyette Besse joins hunger-strike.
- 3 December
- Frérot charged.
 - Oriach appears in court to apologize for comments over Audran murder.
- 16 December – Oriach sentenced to six months in prison for his statements.
- 21 December – Ménigon and Aubron transferred from Fleury-Mérogis prison to penal hospital at Fresnes.
- 28 December – Bruguière finds threat signed by AD in his letter box.

1988

- 9 January – BW explosion at offices of *Mouvement Initiative et Liberté* (MIL).
- 24–25 January – Hamburg (Germany) Renault dealership destroyed by fire started by *Organisation pour les prisonniers d'Action directe*.
- 3 February – 50 helmeted and masked demonstrators carrying banner supporting AD prisoners vandalize *Institut culturel français* in Frankfurt, Germany.
- 5 February – five persons declaring themselves to be an informal AD prisoner support committee occupy Brussels' *Agence France Presse* offices.
- 19 February
- BW bombs INSEE (polling company) building to protest against '*viol des foules, mensonges et manipulation de l'opinion*'.
 - Ménigon, Schleicher and Gailhac acquitted for Charpentier murder attempt.
 - Parents of AD members appeal for satisfaction of group demands.
- 23 February – *Institut médico-légal* on the Quai de la Râpée bombed by *Solidarité révolutionnaire internationale*.
- 18 April – BW bombs offices of Claude Thomazon, president of regional association of bailiffs. Two residents of the building seriously injured.
- 21 April – 22 persons in Paris questioned by the *brigade criminelle* following BW attack. Injured occupants of building in very serious condition.
- 22 April – 12 of 22 persons questioned in connection with BW attack, mostly 20- to 25-year-old extreme-left militants, held in custody.
- 23 April – all those questioned about BW attack freed.
- 17 May – BW vows to 'continue struggle' if government does not abandon Superphénix nuclear fusion project. It calls for a boycott of South Africa and a response to FLNKS demands.

APPENDIX 2.1

ATTACKS BY ACTION DIRECTE, 1979–87

Violent acts attributed to AD:

1979 –	9 attacks
1980 –	17 attacks
1981 –	4 attacks
1982 –	8 attacks
1983 –	7 attacks
1984 –	9 attacks
1985 –	16 attacks
1986 –	6 attacks

1979

1 May – machine-gun attack on CNPF headquarters.

15 September

- explosion in annexe of Ministry of Labour and Participation.
- two bombs dismantled near Ministry of Health.

16 September

- bomb attack on SONACOTRA.
- machine-gun attack on façade of Ministry of Labour and Participation.

24 September – attack on building housing *Caisse professionnelle de prévoyance des salariés* and *Délégation régionale pour l'emploi d'Ile-de-France*.

1980

3 and 5 February – two failed attacks on *Direction régionale du travail et de la main-d'œuvre*.

10 February – bombing of *Société immobilière de construction de Paris*.

11 February – bomb damages offices of SEMIREP (*Société mixte de rénovation du quartier Plaisance*).

16 March – bombing of DST.

18 March – machine-gun fired into Ministry of Cooperation.

28 March – bombing of GIGN.

30 March – attack on Toulouse police headquarters.

5–6 April – fire started by *Clodo* destroyed computers in Toulouse offices of Philips Data Systems.

9 April – fire in Toulouse CII Honeywell offices.

14 April – attack on Toulouse Palais de Justice fails.

15 April

- Ministry of Transport bombed.
- Ministry of Transport annexe attacked by bazooka.
- *Délégation à la sécurité routière* attacked by bazooka.

9 June – arson damages Université Rennes-1 building.

12 June – bomb at Orly-Ouest air terminal injures seven cleaning personnel.

19 September – machine-gun attack on *École militaire*.

1981

23 December – butane gas cartridge explosions at Rolls Royce, Le Train Bleu (toy shop), Brasserie Bofinger and Burberrys (clothes shop).

1982

31 March – Israeli defence ministry commercial mission in Paris machine-gunned.

26 May – gunshots fired at Bank of America.

3 June – European headquarters of World Bank and Paris IMF offices hit by six-kilogram bomb planted by *Unité combattante Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.

4–5 June – explosion at *École Américaine* in St Cloud.

20 July – attack on Bank Leumi and Ganco, an Israeli company.

1 August – unoccupied car belonging to Israeli diplomat machine-gunned by *Unité combattante Marcel Rayman*.

7 August – explosion at Diskount Bank by *Unité combattante Marcel Rayman*.

8 August – attack on Jewish-owned Nemor company supply store by *Unité combattante Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.

11 August – woman severely injured by explosion at Citrus GMBI of Israel.

19–20 August – explosion damages offices of extreme-right monthly *Minute*.

1983

31 May – two police killed on Avenue Trudaine.

28 August – attacks on national offices of PS and Ministry of Defence.

25 September – attack on *Services techniques de construction navale*.

26 September – explosion at *Centre documentation des carrières de la Marine nationale*.

29 September – bomb attack on *Cercle militaire*.

17 November – bomb attacks on *Maison diocésaine* and Seventh-Day Adventist church.

1984

29 January – bombing of offices of arms manufacturer Panhard-Lavessor.

12 July – bombing of *Institut Atlantique des Affaires Internationales* by *Commando Ciro Rizzato*.

13 July – bombing of *Centre de recherches et de constructions navales*, annexe of Ministry of Defence by *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.

14 July – bombing of Ministry of Industry offices by *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.

2 August – bombing of *Agence spatiale européenne* by *Commando Ciro Rizzato*.

23 August – failed attack on WEU.

28 August – bomb attacks on headquarters of PS and Ministry of Defence.

20 October – bombing of Messier-Hispano-Bugatti computer services by *Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.

21 October – bombing of Marcel Dassault company.

9 December – attack on RPR offices by *Commando Hienghène*.

10 December – attack on Elf-Aquitaine offices by *Commando Hienghène*.

1985

25 January – assassination of Audran by *Commando Elisabeth-von-Dick*.

13 April – powerful explosions at Paris offices of Israeli Bank Leumi and the ONI by *Unité combattante Sana Mheidli*.

14 April – Minute offices bombed by *Unité combattante Sana Mheidli*.

27 April – Paris IMF headquarters bombed by *Unité combattante Lahouari Farid Benchellal*.

30 April – explosions at TRT and SAT by *Commando Ciro Rizzato*.

26 June – shots fired at Blandin by *Unité combattante Antonio Lo Musico*.

8 August – ADi-RAF *George Jackson Commando* bomb at US air force base in Frankfurt, Germany kills two Americans.

5 September – attacks on businesses operating in South Africa: ATIC; Aluminium-Péchiney; Renault; and Spie-Batignolles.

14 October – explosions at the *Maison de la Radio* and *Antenne 2*.

17 October – explosion by *Commando Ahmed-Moulay* at *Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel*.

19 October – bomb attacks by *Commando B. Moloïse* on UTA and *Chargeurs Réunis*.

7 December – bomb attack on *Agence centre-Europe d'exploitation*, management offices of NATO pipelines in Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Holland and Germany.

1986

9–10 April – *Air France* offices in Lisbon bombed.

15 April – shots fired at CNPF Vice-President Brana by *Commando Christos Kassimis*.

26 April – bombing of Lyon offices of American Express and Control Data.

16 May – machine-gun and bomb attack on Paris Interpol headquarters.

6 July – explosions at Thomson computer unit and *Air Liquide*.

9 July – *Commando Loïc Lefèvre* bombs BRB temporary offices, killing division inspector and injuring four policemen seriously and 20 other persons.

21 July – car bomb explodes at OECD offices.

1 November – offices of *Air Minerve* and the ONI bombed.

11 November – bombing of Peugeot, Total and Pechiney-Ugine-Kulmann by *Commando Clarence Payi-Sipho Xulu*.

17 November – assassination of Besse by *Commando Pierre Overney*.

15 December – explosion under car of Alain Peyrefitte. Chauffeur killed.

1987

5 January – assassination attempt on Bruguière.

20 March – Italian air force general Licio Giorgieri shot by gunmen by the *Union des communistes combattants*.

APPENDIX 2.2

TYPES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN FRANCE

French left- and right-wing political violence is based on fascist, Nazi, Marxist-Leninist and anarchist ideologies. A 1984 French Senate study showed regionalist terrorists committing 4,284 attacks between 1975 and early 1984. Extreme-leftists committed 676 attacks; international terrorists, 329; racists, 231; and the extreme-right, 217. The overall level of attacks increased between 1975 and 1982. Regionalist attacks on property tripled. Racist attacks doubled from 1981 to 1982. This increase was linked to politics. After the PS took power, regionalists demanded more decentralization while racists charged that there were too many immigrants in France. Racist terrorists had been inactive until the late 1970s. Their reappearance was linked to rising unemployment and a perception that it was connected to Third World immigration.

Most violence between 1975 and early 1984 attacked property rather than people. International terrorists attacked property 4.7 times more than they did people. Regionalists attacked property 18 times more than people. Racist terrorists were four times more likely to attack property than persons. Extreme-right terrorists were three and a half times more likely to attack property than persons. Extreme-left terrorists were 34 times more likely to attack property than individuals.

Overall, regionalists and extreme-leftists were less likely to attack individuals. International, racist and extreme-right terrorists were more likely to attack persons. Only two per cent of extreme-leftist attacks hit individuals as opposed to 22 per cent of extreme-right and 17 per cent of international terrorist attacks. International terrorism caused most deaths and injuries: dead and wounded outstripped those of the nearest group, regionalists, by more than two to one. In contrast, 'ideologically' motivated deaths and injuries by extreme-left and extreme-right were lower. Extreme-left terrorism in France (including AD) varies from the five other types. This variation contradicts the view that leftist violence is particularly dangerous or threatening. Data suggest that this form of terrorism may often appear arbitrary, but is not.

APPENDIX 3

MURDERS AND ATTEMPTED MURDERS BY *ACTION DIRECTE*, 1979-87

1980

29 October – Olivier and Frérot kill security guard Delrieu in BNP robbery.

1981

15 April – policeman killed in robbery of a Paris BNP.

3 November – Brigadier Hubert killed in ADn robbery of *Société lyonnaise*.

1982

13 March – murder of Chahine, member of AD's *mouvance* and informer for the RG in Paris.

1983

31 May – policemen Emile Gondry and Claude Caiola killed on Avenue Trudaine.

1984

27 March – police general Guy Delfosse murdered in hold-up of a Lyon BNP.

1985

25 January – murder of General Audran in front of his home by *Commando Elisabeth-von-Dick*.

26 June – ADi *Unité combattante Antonio Lo Musico* fires shots at Henri Blandin's car.

8 August – ADi-RAF *George Jackson Commando* bombs Frankfurt, Germany US air force base. Two Americans killed and 11 injured.

1986

15 April – shots fired by *Commando Christos Kassimis* at CNPF Vice-President Brana in front of his home.

25 April – Black and Decker France Director Marston murdered in his home by Frérot.

9 July – ten-kilogram bomb devastates offices of *Brigade de répression du banditisme* (BRB), killing a division inspector and wounding 24 others.

17 November – Renault President Besse shot in front of his home by *Commando Pierre-Overney*.

15 December – Alain Peyrefitte's car bombed. Chauffeur Serge Langer killed.

1987

5 January – assassination attempt on Bruguière.

APPENDIX 4.1

ATTACKS BY THE *GROUPE BAKOUNINE-GDANSK-PARIS-GUATEMALA-SALVADOR* (GBGPGS)

1981

20 December – bomb attack on offices of Polish transport company *Botrans*. Responsibility claimed in '*Communiqué 1*'.

1982

10 January – three bomb attacks. Responsibility claimed in '*Communiqué 2*':

- offices of ESMIL import-export firm working in US.
- offices of Soviet jewellery company SLAVA.
- offices and store of *Metallex*, a Polish tool company.

11 February – three bombs. Responsibility claimed in '*Communiqué 3*':

- offices of Chilean national airline, *Lan Chile*.
- offices of American appliance firm *ITT Television*.
- offices of *Sansinea*, a company importing Argentine beef.

14 February – two bomb attacks. Responsibility taken in '*Communiqué 3 bis*':

- offices of Colombian steel firm *Acieras Paz Del Rio*.
- offices of American appliance firm *Bendix*.

1 November – bombing of '*La Slava*' jewellery shop by *Hooligans Internationalistes*, GBGPGS.

19 November – two bomb attacks. Responsibility claimed in '*Communiqué 5*' by *Hooligans Internationalistes*, GBGPGS.

- offices of *Outspan Organization*, French subsidiary of South African company that imports and exports citrus fruit.
- offices of *Promo Chimie*, French import-export firm working in China, Japan and South Africa. The text denies GBGPGS links to AD.

- 21 November – bombing of French metallurgy company COFRANET (*Compagnie française des métaux*), a Rothschild subsidiary, by *Hooligans Internationalistes*, GBGPS. Responsibility claimed in 'Communiqué 6'.
- 26 December – bombing at ground-floor offices of *Air Material*, which sells aircraft radar equipment. Responsibility claimed in 'Communiqué 7'.

1983

- 20 January – bombing of administrative offices for reviews published by Ministry of Defence. One person slightly injured. Responsibility claimed in 'Communiqué 8'.
- 14 February – bomb attack on exterior façade of SAMM (*Société d'application des machines motrices*). Responsibility claimed in 'Communiqué 9'.

APPENDIX 4.2 BLACK WAR (BW)

BW first appeared in a 12 December 1985 attack on *Légitime défense*. It then struck the *Conférence internationale des résistances en pays occupés* (CIRPO) on 24 January 1986. On 6 April, BW hit *Parti ouvrier européen* (POE) offices and, on 22 June, bombed Rothmans cigarette company offices. BW attacked Union Carbide's French subsidiary, *Société générale des Techniques industrielles* (SGTI) on 19 June 1987. On 9 January 1988 it bombed the movement *Initiative et Liberté* (MIL), charging that it was an 'organisation fasciste qui amalgame socialisme et SIDA'. MIL claims to defend initiative and liberty. BW attacks rose in 1988. On 19 February it bombed an INSEE (polling company) building, declaring that in 'this pre-electoral period, polls signify the rape of crowds, lies, and manipulation of opinion . . . Let's force a stop to polls for political ends'.¹

On 18 April, BW bombed offices of the Paris-region bailiffs' association, injuring two people. A communiqué stated that 'in this pre-electoral period, Black War, with its modest means, presents its programme; first of all, in solidarity with all the poor who have been expelled or seized, it proposes the destruction of all the offices of bailiffs and the Public Treasury'.² BW said it struggled 'against racism and fascism . . . apartheid and those who support it' to 'raise awareness in connection with the slide of our democracies towards police states and soft fascism'.³ On 21 April 1988, 22 people aged from 20 to 25 were questioned. Many were close to the rock group *Les Bérrurier noir*. The group rejects 'the system' and 'the pigsty Le Pen' and was named France's best rock group in 1987. Some

produced the *Parloirs libres* radio programme. Others were anti-racist activists and conscientious objectors at the review *Reflexe*. By 23 April all were freed. On 17 May BW said it would continue attacks if the *Superphénix* nuclear project went ahead. It demanded a boycott of South Africa and negotiations with FLNKS in return for a 'truce'. BW said it had no illusions about the PS: 'we know very well that a Chevènement is capable of the same jingoism and crimes as a Charles Hernu'.⁴

NOTES

1. 'Cette période pré-électorale signifie viol des foules, mensonges et manipulation de l'opinion . . . Imposons l'arrêt des sondages à des fins politiques.'
2. 'En cette période électorale, Black War, avec des modestes moyens, présente son programme, d'abord en solidarité avec tous les pauvres saisis ou expulsés, il propose la destruction de tous les bureaux d'huissiers et du Trésor public.'
3. 'Contre le racisme et le fascisme . . . , l'apartheid et ceux qui le soutiennent' to 'développer la prise de conscience, rapport au glissement de nos démocraties vers l'Etat policier et le fascisme mou'.
4. 'Sans illusions, nous savons bien qu'un Chevènement est capable des mêmes cocoricos et des mêmes crimes qu'un Charles Hernu.'

APPENDIX 4.3

ACTION DIRECTE TRIALS AND IMPRISONMENT

ADi trials

The first trials focused on the 1983 Avenue Trudaine shooting. On 3 December 1986, Schleicher, Nicolas and Claude Halfen went to court. They repeatedly threatened the jury. Schleicher declared that 'ceux qui siégeront ici, magistrats ou jurés, s'exposeront aux rigueurs de la justice prolétarienne, et, à titre d'information, je voudrais savoir à ce sujet combien de temps vous avez prévu pour les faire protéger'. Judge Xavier Versini adjourned proceedings. The jury resigned on 8 December. Seven Paris judges then sentenced Schleicher to life-imprisonment and Nicolas Halfen to ten years, and acquitted Claude Halfen on 13 June 1987.

The defence ministry filed a complaint of injury to public administration against Oriach on 20 June 1986. During a 12 June edition of the Europe-1 radio show *Découvertes*, Oriach stated: 'Je ne vais pas la regretter, le général Audran était un trafiquant d'armes international.' When the interviewer said Audran was only a civil servant, Oriach responded: 'Oui, il y a des fonctionnaires chez les trafiquants d'armes.' Police afterwards questioned Oriach about the 9 September 1986 FARL attack on a Rue de Rennes Tati store.¹ Although his FARL-AD links were unclear, police suspected that he was

an intermediary and also questioned him about a two-month visit to Syria. On 27 November 1987, Oriach was charged with '*association de malfaiteurs en relation avec une entreprise terroriste*' and imprisoned. He had been questioned by DST on 23 November at his home near Rennes, where he was writing a book. In his house, police found a list of officials, magistrates and Interior Ministry anti-terrorism directors along with the floor-plan of the Paris Palais de Justice. Lawyers Isabelle Coutant-Peyre and Jean-Louis Chalanset said Oriach was originally questioned about Iranian extreme-leftist, Azita Chipour, and claimed that he was virtually abducted. In a Paris court on 3 December, Oriach refused to retract statements about Audran. He declared he was an enemy of the government and a revolutionary communist. The prosecutor argued that Oriach's statements justified murder. On 16 December 1987, he was condemned to six months in prison.²

AD found the prison system ripe for agitation. On 1 December 1987, Rouillan, Cipriani, Schleicher, Aubron and Ménigon began a hunger-strike. They insisted that AD militants were political prisoners and should be grouped together. They demanded immediate closure of the reinforced security isolation cells in which they were held.³ Helyette Besse joined the hunger-strike on 2 December. Their health slowly deteriorated but the Chirac government refused to give in. On 21 December, Ménigon and Aubron were transferred to Fresnes penal hospital.

A trial of 22 people linked to ADi began on 11 January 1988.⁴ Charges ranged from leadership of AD to association with known criminals. The prosecution described the defendants as a criminal group having '*entente en vue de préparer des crimes*'. The crime was first defined by the *Code Napoléon* to punish highway robbers. Its provisions were extended to political delinquency in a controversial 18 June 1893 amendment. The other main charge was association with known criminals, a charge that permits legal action in the absence of substantiating evidence. The French term *association* refers to a range of political and emotional relationships. The charges against ADi members and associates were 350 pages long.

State witnesses spoke on 17 January.⁵ Schleicher, in his second court appearance after arrest, read two texts that affirmed his membership in AD and support for '*la lutte révolutionnaire du peuple palestinien contre l'impérialisme sioniste*'. The first witness was a former Renault worker, Jean-Antoine Carbo. The prosecution alleged that Baudrillart, Benoit and Jean Asselmeyer⁶ tried to incite Carbo to commit violence at Renault's Rouen factory. However, Carbo said the accused did not encourage violent acts and that their discussions focused on conditions in Italian Fiat plants. He said police intimidated him into signing statements and that he cooperated out of fear. Witness Sylvie Regnier, a friend of Carbo, concurred

that her signed testimony was untrue. A fourth witness, Sylvie Vallée, contradicted previous statements to police by denying any knowledge that Benoit and Baudrillart hid arms in her cellar.⁷

On 18 January, deputy public prosecutor Michel Gauthier requested a variety of sentences: from a one-year suspended sentence (for lawyer Charlotte Granier and niece Sandrine Guibert) to eight years (for *mouvance* members Baudrillart, Benoit, Poirré and Asselmeyer) to ten years (for Rouillan, Ménigon, Aubron, Cipriani, Schleicher, Spano, the Halfens, Besse and Hamami). He asked for clemency for repentant Frédérique Germain.⁸ The request provoked sarcastic derision from defence benches. ADi members considered Germain a lightweight and a traitor and suspected that the state had paid her off. After listening to her lawyer argue over compensation for repentant Italian terrorists on 19 January 1988, Ménigon said '*En France, ça se passe sous la table*'. Judge Jacques Duclos expelled her from court. A guard standing above her hit Ménigon's shoulder. She was expelled from court crying 'Let me go!'. Other defendants were expelled after protests. The trial ended on 21 January 1988. Lawyers defending ADi members were then at risk. On 22 January, a Toulouse court postponed ruling on lawyers Marie-Christine and Christian Etelin, who defended many AD members. Charged with violating professional secrets, they were questioned and their offices searched during the Audran investigation.

The above trials and hunger-strikes had impact outside the courts. On 24–25 January, the *Organisation pour les prisonniers d'Action directe* destroyed a Renault dealer office and showroom in Hamburg, Germany. Petrol was spread around and showroom windows smashed, but no fire was started. On 3 February, the Frankfurt *Institut culturel français* was ransacked, causing about 50,000 francs worth of damage. Fifty helmeted and masked demonstrators carrying a banner of support for AD prisoners blocked the street and vandalized the institute. The group was then on day 65 of its hunger-strike. On 5 February, five persons calling themselves an informal AD prisoner support committee occupied Brussels AFP offices, demanded publication of a text affirming solidarity with AD prisoners, and protested against media silence on the hunger-strike.

The Chirac government still refused to respond. Security minister Robert Pandraud declared on 17 February 1988: '*faire la grève de la faim, c'est leur droit. On peut toujours faire des régimes amaigrissants*'. The statement aroused serious concern over the prisoners' conditions. *Ligue des droits de l'homme* president Yves Jouffa demanded that justice minister Albin Chalandon end ADi leaders' isolation. He said it contradicted non-discrimination clauses in the European declaration of human rights and a 1973 Council of Europe document. Jouffa stated in a letter of

12 February to Albin Chalandon that the trial brought out 'le caractère dérogatoire aux droits de l'homme que constituent aujourd'hui les conditions carcérales de certains prisonniers en France'. However, the secretary of state for human rights, Claude Malhuret, condemned Jouffa's statements on 18 February. He said the criticism aided AD's struggle since the strike was part of the same combat it waged outside prison. The communist *Rénovateur* candidate in the 1988 presidential election, Pierre Juquin, then declared that state terrorism was not an acceptable response to violence. The *Verts* demanded that the government end the strike and AD's isolation.

Concern over the group members' deteriorating health spread from families to left-wing politicians and intellectuals. On 19 February, parents and friends of AD members⁹ appealed to the government. They declared:

l'isolement auquel est soumis l'ensemble des prisonniers politiques en France, ce n'est pas seulement être seul en cellule. C'est, comme le dénonce Amnesty International, une véritable torture, la 'torture blanche'. L'isolement c'est couper le prisonnier de tout contact social, affectif. C'est la volonté de casser une personne. . . Nous faisons paraître cet appel au nom des droits de l'homme et par simple humanisme. La prison est censée sanctionner des délits par privation de liberté, rien de plus.

The appeal and international publicity had some effect. On 20 February, François Mitterrand, preparing for the 1988 presidential elections, declared to the newspaper *Dauphiné libéré* that a terrorist's right to self-defence in court had to be respected. On 22 February 140 public figures¹⁰ asked the Minister of Justice to postpone ADi's trial for health reasons, arguing that not doing so would transform the trial into a 'sinistre cérémonie', and agreeing with Yves Jouffa's statements of 12 February.

These events accompanied a very real decline in the health of the ADi prisoners. Rouillan and Cipriani were hospitalized shortly after trial on 30 January 1988. ADi lawyer Bernard Ripert said their health was 'worrying' after the two-month hunger-strike and added that Aubron and Ménigon's health was 'precarious'.¹¹ The two were soon hospitalized in Fresnes prison. On 15 February, Rouillan could not appear in court to extend his detention without charge. Fresnes prison hospital authorities said he was too fragile. Instead, Judge Bruguière went to Fresnes. Dominique Poirré, serving five years in prison for association with known criminals, went on a solidarity hunger-strike on 16 February. The government continued to separate and isolate AD members. Poirré was transferred to a Metz prison on 11 March.

A determination to act decisively and show no compassion was central to the image the Chirac government constructed in the 1988 elections.

However, it was decisively rejected by the voters. ADi trials continued despite controversy. On 12 February, Ménigon, Rouillan, Aubron and Cipriani were each sentenced to ten years for associating with known criminals and possessing forged documents, arms and explosives. On 17 February, Ménigon was sentenced to 12 years for the 13 September 1980 Rue Pergolèse shoot-out. Ménigon, Schleicher and Jean-François Gailhac were tried for a 1982 murder attempt on Alain Charpentier on 18 February 1988. Ménigon's health again aroused concern since she was weak, distracted and fell asleep in court. The defendants were acquitted on 19 February after Charpentier testified that he did not know them. He said police had pressured for his accusation because they had difficulty developing a case in 1982.

The ADi four appeared in court for the 1983 robbery of the Aldebert jewellery boutique and the Avenue de Villiers *Société générale* on 23 February. Testifying about Rouillan's character, psychiatrist Michel Dubec noted he was very talkative, had a particularly happy childhood and turned to terrorism out of conviction rather than unhappiness. Dubec said Rouillan created his life without romanticism and is convinced his choices are guided by a revolutionary communism that is bereft of a personal dimension. At the same trial, Frédérique Germain claimed to have been 'naïve' about AD. She said she participated in the Aldebert heist to protect her lover, Claude Halfen. On 23 February, two 5:30 a.m. explosions rocked the Paris *Institut médico-légal*. Tracts left behind by *Solidarité révolutionnaire internationale* declared:

Un Etat trafiquant d'armes, une société qui tire profit de la mort ne doivent pas s'étonner des réactions au procès d'Action directe. Nous ne sommes pas des sympathisants d'Action directe mais nous réclamons la suppression des QHS et des quartiers d'isolement. Nous sommes contre le langage d'un Etat cannibale.

The explosions shattered windows, blew off doors and damaged the office of the *concierge*. Police said the cover 'SRI' was used by several groups. Later the same day, philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Regulier-Lefebvre condemned the treatment of AD and declared sympathy with the goal of a communist society. The next day, a public appeal was issued about ADi's treatment and prison isolation practices.

ADi's trial progressed slowly because of the complex charges, the poor health of the accused and the government's tough anti-terrorist stand. Declaring they had nothing further to say, Rouillan, Schleicher, Spano and the Halfens left court on 24 February. This followed a court

refusal to suspend Rouillan's trial. Proceedings none the less continued. On 27 February, Ménigon, Rouillan, Aubron and Cipriani were very weak and refused intravenous feeding. The four only drank water and rejected vitamin additives to prevent irreversible health problems. Prison doctors said their health had not deteriorated enough to merit forced intravenous feeding, which they wanted to avoid. ADi prisoners aroused sympathy among other detainees. Alain Trouvé, an inmate convicted for robbery, refused to eat for ten days in solidarity with ADi. On 29 February, inmates in the Fleury-Mérogis *Maison d'arrêt des femmes* refused food in solidarity with ADi. Many prisoners were then transferred, and the hunger-strike began seriously to disrupt the prison system. A Fleury-Mérogis DPS group announced a day of protest against prison isolation on 14 March 1988. They called for an end to prison isolation and urged other inmates to refuse food. They said the struggle against isolation assisted AD and thousands of other detainees 'who refuse to be reduced to the state of a bleating and docile herd'. The protest focused on Patrick Langlois, condemned to 15 years' imprisonment and considered a prison protest movement leader. He had been held in isolation for two years and transferred to a different prison every four months.

The image of starving prisoners is unacceptable in a democracy and reveals the political intent of the hunger-strikes. Ménigon, Aubron, Rouillan and Cipriani drew the Chirac government into an unfavourable role by using their health to annul procedures in the Besse murder. Hunger-strikes were ADi's ultimate weapon and were far more successful than terrorist techniques. Lawyer Bernard Ripert stated that their health turned proceedings into a 'trial on intravenous nourishment'. He announced that ADi members were confined to wheelchairs. The government's obsession with pursuing the trials began to appear brutal and single-minded. Ménigon and Aubron were intravenously force-fed after 5 March. On 10 March, six signatories of the 23 February appeal¹² demanded a meeting with Albin Chalandon and said his response to the *Ligue des droits de l'homme* was unacceptable. However, the government continued to treat AD severely. On the hundredth day of the hunger strike (11 March 1988), the justice ministry said pieces of chocolate and biscuits were found under ADi prisoners' beds and that they willingly accepted intravenous nourishment.

A group of intellectuals¹³ made yet another appeal on 20 March. They demanded that prison authorities end their severe methods. They said that nothing prevented the satisfaction of ADi demands and that the authorities' attitudes were '*une vengeance préventative*'. On 22 March 1988, after 116 days on hunger-strike, the ADi four were in Fresnes prison hospital. On 12 March, Rouillan and Cipriani were retaining water in their legs, a sign

of serious metabolic problems, and had lost feeling in their hands. Aubron and Ménigon were very weak. Prison hospital authorities urged the four to consent to intravenous feeding or be forced to accept it. The group agreed and from 12–20 March received three litres of liquid per day. The injections contained potassium, lipids, glucose, proteins and multivitamins. This treatment was hard on the weakened militants since it took up to ten hours per day to administer. They recovered some strength, but Aubron had respiratory and hearing problems. Alternating hunger-strikes and intravenous feeding increases the risk of serious muscular problems, weakness and infection. ADi leaders risked colds, viruses and falling into semi-suicidal states. Solidarity movements demanding an end to the strike and the abolition of isolation grew at Fresnes and Fleury-Mérogis. A committee of public figures started an inquiry into prison conditions and the accompanying psychosomatic problems. A *Comité pour l'abolition de l'isolement carcéral* was formed to support DPSs. Signatories of the intellectuals' appeal said the situation was at an impasse.¹⁴ The deadlock was resolved on 26 March 1988 when the four called off the hunger-strike and gradually began eating. A Chancellery spokesperson said suspension of the strike was not linked to concessions. Lawyer Marie-Christine Etelin released an ADi statement declaring the strike suspended but asserting that the will to struggle was unbroken.

The trials continued. After the 1988 elections, ADi's prison conditions seemed about to change. The new PS Justice Minister, Pierre Arpaillange, lifted isolation measures for Corsican, Guadeloupean, Basque and AD prisoners charged with terrorism on 5 July 1988. Taken without consulting either the Elysée or Matignon, the move embarrassed the government and provoked right-wing attacks. The new measures provided that prisoners be 'held in detention' before hearing and judgment. Sensitive to Amnesty International's description of isolation as 'torture', Arpaillange wanted to improve conditions for humanitarian reasons and not tarnish France's human rights' record during the 1989 bicentennial, in which the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme* was the central theme. Arpaillange proposed that two prisoners be allowed in a cell and that they exercise with other prisoners. Legal authorities found the measures 'disturbing'. Prison management and guard unions said they would be seen as a weakness by groups opposed to the state and would jeopardize personnel. Fifty-four thousand prisoners were detained in France and its overseas departments at the time. Two hundred and eighty-one prisoners demanded political status, of whom 33 were in isolation in the Paris region. Sixteen prisoners had been in isolation since 1987 (of these nine were in isolation for over a year). Two of the 33 prisoners had been held in isolation since July 1986.

Over the entire period, ADi trials continued. On 18 April 1988 Rouillan was charged with 'attempted murder and destruction of a building and property by explosives'. Schleicher, Claude Halfen and Spano's ten-year sentences for association with criminals were confirmed on 4 July 1988. Nicolas Halfen received a six-year sentence. At the same time, Helyette Besse's eight-year sentence was reduced to six years. On 30 September, she was acquitted in connection with two incidents, but remained in prison. Jean Asselmeyer's seven-year sentence was reduced to six years. Salvatore Nicofia, acquitted for associating with criminals, was given four years for receiving forged documents. Annelyse Benoit and Bruno Baudrillart were sentenced to five and seven years respectively for receiving, using and forging documents. In confirming the sentences, judges distinguished ADi members and the *mouvance*. In their view, the *mouvance* could not be punished for the company it kept.

ADi's hunger-strike spread to other terrorist prisoners. On 10 September 1988, nine Basque militants in Fresnes, Fleury-Mérogis and La Santé prisons began a hunger-strike. They demanded the end to the isolation of leader Philippe Bidart (held in isolation since his 20 February 1988 arrest) and the transfer of his aide Joseph Etcheveste to a hospital that could care for him. Etcheveste's vertebral column had been injured during his arrest and he was paralysed. His lawyers argued that this resulted from improper medical care. Hunger-strikes then spread. On 13 September 1988 a letter from Paris region prisoners to François Mitterrand warned of impending hunger-strikes and demanded: (1) end of isolation status; (2) end to special status for certain prisoners; (3) improved conditions (hygiene, work, study, family contact); and (4) more flexible penalties (looser conditional release and increased exit permits).

The text resembled a union document. Having underestimated the movement's magnitude, prison authorities were disconcerted. The ensuing hunger-strike was followed to varying degrees across France: 600 of 3,900 dinners were refused in Fresnes; 800 of 4,700 in Fleury-Mérogis; 250 of 1,400 in Bois-d'Arcy; 165 of 1,950 in La Santé; 575 in 1,150 at Lyon; 50 of 150 in Chambéry; and 1,430 of 2,027 in Baumettes. In a prison near Toulouse, the CRS had to force prisoners back into the cells after exercise. Across France, 5,620 dinner trays were refused. Prison authorities said the movement was calm and the problem was being contained. The hunger-strike reflected a general malaise in the prison system that spread to employees. On 7 October, the Besse murder trial was delayed by a prison guard strike.

On 7 August 1988, a Belgian court set trial dates for militants involved in a series of 1985 bombings. CCC members Carette, Chevolet, Vandergeerde and Sassoye faced charges for 21 bombings. They went on trial in

Brussels with FRAP (*Front révolutionnaire d'action prolétarienne*) members Luc Van Acker and Chantal Paternostre on 26 September 1988. The defendants were charged with associating with known criminals, destroying public buildings, possessing arms, involuntary homicide and attempted murder. The prosecution tried to substantiate CCC, AD and RAF links using documents from the Audran case and captured arms and explosives. Belgian journalists described the CCC as an anarchist group with sect-like structures. Controversy grew over the extent of police knowledge about CCC plans, locations and connections before attacks. The CCC withdrew its lawyers on 27 September, stating that the trial was counter-revolutionary and contrary to its interests. Defendants warned the jury: '*un jour viendra où les forces politiques révolutionnaires devront sévir contre ceux qui continueront à collaborer à la contre-révolution. Alors, ce jour-là, la place que vous occupez actuellement pourra coûter très cher.*' FRAP defendants accepted the trial's legitimacy, but denied the charges.

CCC members then went on hunger-strike to protest against conditions. Their lawyers wrote to the justice minister to request improvements, expressing concern over their clients' health, on 18 October. Chevolet's weight fell from 71 to 61 kilos by day 47 of his strike. Vandergeerde, on strike for 33 days, went from 48 to 36 kilos. Carette went from 83 to 71 kilos. Bertrand Sassoye went from 66 to 53 kilos by day 26. Only the latter was able to attend proceedings. Doctors said irreversible long-term health effects were possible. Defendants were nevertheless sentenced to life terms of forced labour on 21 October. The sentences were considered extremely severe. FRAP members received five years in prison. CCC defendants were found guilty in all 21 attacks during 1984 and 1985. One attack killed a fireman. Another wounded a bank guard. The assistant public prosecutor said the death penalty (still in force in Belgium) was unsuitable since it responded to the CCC claim that it was in a state of war. Lawyers pressed the government to give the CCC political status and to improve conditions.¹⁵

By 1989, both wings of AD were moribund.¹⁶ Police stated that the French extreme-left terrorist 'pool' had no more than 250 persons and estimated that there were 180 potential AD and *mouvance* members.¹⁷ Twenty-two of 25 known AD members were imprisoned on 1 January 1989, making violence unlikely even though 53 persons connected to AD remained at large. Police regularly watched 45 of them. On 9 January, the Besse murder trial began in a special Paris court made up of seven judges. Deliberation was carried out under provisions of the 9 September and 30 December 1986 anti-terrorist laws on '*infractions en relation avec une entreprise collective ayant pour but de troubler gravement l'ordre public par l'intimidation ou la terreur*'. Rouillan, Ménigon, Aubron and Cipriani said

they had 'nothing to say' about the circumstances and motives for Besse's murder. On 14 January they were sentenced to life imprisonment plus 18-year security sentences.

On 20 April 1989, Rouillan, Ménigon, Cipriani and Aubron began yet another hunger-strike for political prisoner status, grouping in adjacent cells and the right to communicate between themselves. The government did not respond and the strike dragged on for months. On 11 July 1989, the Justice Ministry described the four as '*affaiblis et amaigris*' and said they moved with difficulty and refused all medical assistance. Prison officials began intravenous force-feeding on 18 July. Aubron in particular resisted. Medical conventions stating that no doctor should treat a patient against their wishes were overridden by article D 390 of the French Penal Code, which stipulates: '*Si un détenu se livre à une grève de la faim prolongée, il peut être procédé à son alimentation forcée, mais seulement sur décision et sous surveillance médicale lorsque ses jours risquent d'être mis en danger.*' As the hunger-strike reached its ninety-fifth day, the state was ready to compromise. It proposed changes, but excluded granting political prisoner status since the category had been abolished in 1981. The main barrier to changing ADi conditions was Bruguière. ADi lawyers Isabelle Coutant-Peyre and Christian Etelin said the group's health was alarming:

*C'est une question d'heures. Les deux garçons ne marchent plus. Ils ont le teint gris, sont décharnés. Joëlle Aubron pèse moins de 40 kg pour 1,72 m. Les hommes sont sur des fauteuils roulants! Ils ont du mal à tenir leur tête droite. Les filles marchent très difficilement. Elles étaient recroquevillées sur une table, prostrées, lorsque je les ai vues. Leurs muscles leur font trop mal. Il ont tous des absences, des problèmes de concentration.*¹⁸

Critics said Bruguière's reasons for maintaining isolation were personal since he had long been an AD target and was obsessed by the group's trial and punishment. AD lawyers pleaded in a Paris court that their clients had to be freed because of their rapidly deteriorating health. About 15 AD sympathizers then occupied newspaper *Quotidien de Paris* offices to force publication of a text denouncing '*le discours des médias*'.

Bruguière was called to the Justice Ministry on 19 July to help find a solution. He lifted communication restrictions imposed on ADi. The *Garde des Sceaux* said the decision was taken for humanitarian reasons. The government placed the four in adjacent cells (rather than in the same one as ADi demanded) and allowed common exercise. Former Chirac security minister Robert Pandraud said giving into the demands was a capitulation to 'blackmail' because the four '*sont ces criminels très dangereux prêts à d'autres chantages, afin d'organiser, depuis la prison, de nouveaux actes terroristes*'. Audran's daughter said the hunger-strike was a form of blackmail to which

no concession should be made: '*S'ils ont choisi de se donner la mort, c'est leur libre choix. La peine de mort n'existe plus. S'ils se la donnent eux-mêmes, eh bien, tant mieux.*'¹⁹ On 21 July 1989, the hunger-strike ended even though the demand for 'working meetings' was not met. When the Justice Minister said there was no question of more concessions, the group capitulated and the four were placed in neighbouring cells. The *Syndicat de la magistrature*, specifying that it did not accept AD ideas, declared

l'isolement rigoureux et prolongé des détenus est assimilable à une torture et à un traitement inhumain et dégradant au regard de la convention européenne de sauvegarde des libertés. Il serait peut-être temps que la France . . . introduise une possibilité de recours contre de telles mesures d'isolement et de mise au secret.

In contrast, the *Association professionnelle des magistrats* denounced '*les pressions de toute nature exercées sur le juge Bruguière pour le contraindre à modifier le régime de détention des dirigeants d'Action directe. Des promesses inconsidérées ont été, avec la dernière imprudence, faites à des terroristes dangereux.* Club 89, led by former RPR minister Michel Aurillac, deplored '*les mesures de clémence que le gouvernement vient de consentir sous le chantage à des terroristes qui ont du sang sur les mains et n'ont à aucun moment manifesté de repentir au sujet des crimes par eux commis.*'²⁰

ADn trials

One of the first persons associated with ADn who went to trial was former member Mouloud Aïssou.²¹ He was accused of taking part in hold-ups with Olivier and Frérot on 24 March 1980, 7 December 1981 and 30 March 1981 (according to Frérot's notes), and was detained without charge on 23 July 1987. Witnesses said Aïssou, a former student of Olivier's, saw neither the latter nor Frérot by the time of the last two robberies. Believing his repentance and willingness to cooperate merited consideration, Aïssou went on hunger-strike to demand bail on 21 June 1988. He openly admitted his past ties to ADn members. He had had an affair with Crépet and sheltered Renaud Laigle.²² Aïssou's lawyer, Thierry Lévy, argued that he should be freed under the 1981 amnesty since he had no intention of evading justice, as demonstrated by his arrest in his own home in both July 1986 and July 1987. Aïssou's plight aroused public sympathy. A group²³ appealed for his release on 29 July 1988. Sixty Lyon prisoners refused meals in solidarity with him on 3 August. None the less, a Lyon court rejected Aïssou's appeal of 5 August. Lévy again raised the issue during preparations for ADn's trial in November 1988.

On 3 December 1987 Frérot was charged with associating with known criminals, voluntary homicide, armed robbery, hostage-taking, destruction with explosives, and possession of arms and explosives. He chose Klaus Barbie's lawyer, Jacques Vergès, to defend him. On 10 October 1988, ADn member Mathieu Polack was charged by Paris *juge d'instruction* Gilles Rivière with damaging private property and goods with explosives in an attack on *Minute* on 19 August 1982.²⁴ In November 1988, shortly before ADn's trial, prosecutor François Coste requested that the 21 defendants appear in a special court. Preparations for ADn trials ran into problems. Investigations into the 1984 murder of police general Guy Delfosse were delayed when police recovered two different revolvers used in the hold-up. A P-38 special found in an ADn hide-out near Saint Étienne was believed to have killed Delfosse, but a Lyon police laboratory had previously stated that a 357-Magnum was the weapon. *Juge d'instruction* Marcel Lemonde ordered more ballistics tests.

The ADn trial started in a special Lyon *cour d'assises* on 16 May 1989. Seven judges substituted for the jury under provisions of the 9 September 1986 anti-terrorist law. Twenty persons²⁵ appeared for judgment in relation to 34 armed attacks and three counts of second-degree murder. The crimes were committed in Lyon and Saint Étienne. Twenty-seven bomb attacks, one which led to a death, were to be tried later in Paris. Observers were interested to see how Olivier, Frérot, Crépet, Ballandras and Blanc had moulded a diffuse group of depoliticized drop-outs into a revolutionary terrorist unit.²⁶ ADn activity resembled banditry more than terrorism. From March 1980 to December 1985, ADn robbed about 30 banks, amassing 3,500,000 francs. ADn did not use assassination, but three persons were killed during robberies (Delrieu, Hubert and Delfosse).

When the trial finally started, defence lawyers quickly appealed for a delay. They argued that the Lyon trial would conflict with later ones in Paris. The trial went ahead. Although ADn pleaded it was a group of 'revolutionary fighters' motivated by political ideals, testimonies by victims and witnesses contradicted the claim. One witness with a fairly serious mental handicap, Nicole Faure,²⁷ said she became involved in ADn through her love for Bernard Blanc. Olivier subsequently intimidated her into scouting banks, borrowing cars and hiding packages. Witnesses at bank robberies testified that ADn physically abused bank employees and anyone in its way. Frérot then read a long declaration denouncing the evils of imperialism and France's role in Africa. A Portuguese cleaning woman then contradicted these humanitarian ideals by stating Frérot pulled her hair, hit her, threatened her with death, and threw her into a lavatory with adhesive tape over her mouth during a robbery. The woman still suffered depression, nightmares and suicidal fits five years later.

Olivier and Frérot tried to get attention on 18 May 1989. Openly revealing his anti-Semitism, Olivier declared: *'Je tiens à signaler que le keffieh est interdit dans les tribunaux français! Je suppose que la calotte juive doit être autorisée . . .'* He wore a bright red shirt at the trial and carried a Palestinian scarf until the authorities, fearful he would attack co-defendants who said too much, made him change his clothes. Frérot criticized the prosecution for refusing to free Nicole Charvolin. He noted that Gennevilliers municipal councillor Pierre Van Dorpe had shot at a Maghrebin on 29 April but was freed after paying 12,000 francs. The court refused to delay proceedings on the basis of logistical evidence. ADn had access to a dozen apartments, about 20 garages, tons of forged papers, 22 vehicles and 19 guns of various calibres. GRB (*Groupe de répression du banditisme*) member Bruno Savoye described Frérot as a *'grand professionnel du vol à main armée'* and a handyman who tapped into bank agency telephone lines to learn about fund transfers and investigators' conversations. On 24 May Crépet made a long statement in which she declared:

Je ne suis pas une terroriste, pas une criminelle, je suis contre la violence et j'ai toujours agi pour la limiter à des actes symboliques contre l'Etat . . . Je suis femme, et la misère des enfants du monde étalée par les medias m'est insupportable. Je suis infirmière, et pour avoir lutté quotidiennement contre elle je connais la souffrance qui ne s'embarrasse ni de race ni de classe. Je suis citoyenne, et je constate la violence faite aux hommes par le capitalisme et l'impérialisme. Je suis travailleuse, et j'ai acquis le sens de la solidarité à côté des gens qui luttent pour leur dignité. C'est comme travailleuse, citoyenne, infirmière et femme, s'insurgeant contre toutes les injustices, que j'ai engagé ma vie dans l'Action directe.

Crépet had previously only appeared as Olivier's lover but now set herself apart:

Je suis contre les assassinats politiques, comme celui de M. Besse. Oui, nous avons fait des braquages mais je regrette qu'ils aient, accidentalement, entraîné trois morts d'hommes . . . Contrairement aux politiciens dont les tripotages ont été amnistiés, nous n'avons pas pu nous financer par des fausses factures. Moi, simple et pauvre révoltée, devais-je pour autant renoncer à la lutte?

Olivier said that this demonstrated AD's democratic character, adding that he favoured killing several *'porcs'*, but the demand to discuss politics did not impress the court. It sentenced ADn members to pay 5,500,000 francs to victims: 3,678,000 francs to the state, which litigated for Delfosse; and 960,000 francs to Delrieu's family. The latter appealed to

a compensation commission since ADn members were broke. The court sentenced ADn members to long terms of imprisonment on 29 June:

perpétuité assortie d'une période de sûreté de dix-huit ans pour André Olivier et Maxime Frérot, perpétuité dont seize années de sûreté pour Emile Ballandras – aucun d'eux n'ayant bénéficié des circonstances atténuantes – vingt ans dont les deux tiers de sûreté pour Bernard Blanc et dix-huit ans dont dix de sûreté pour Joëlle Crépet.²⁸

Twelve other ADn members²⁹ received lighter sentences. Eight of the 19 were freed. Ex-member Lallaoui received ten years for possession of arms, ammunition, explosives and stolen money.³⁰

NOTES

1. Tati is a French discount department store.
2. The Chirac government's tough stance was illustrated by harassment of journalists covering the trial. *Nouvel Observateur* publications director Claude Perdiel and journalist Serge Raffy were detained because they reported on Oriach's statements.
3. Two types of isolation existed in French prisons in 1987: disciplinary and security. Separate reinforced security and high security quarters were abolished after 1982. Political prisoner status was no longer recognized by the authorities. Those who would have been called political prisoners before 1982 were held in the same centres as other prisoners and not in individual isolation. Disciplinary and security isolation were afterwards introduced. Security isolation was applied to terrorists and isolated prisoners from their peers and fellow militants as 'DPS' (*détenus particulièrement signalés*). DPS are held individually in cells. Exercise is solitary and the schedule constantly altered. All communication is subject to tight restrictions. A light is left on in cells at night. Body searches are constant. No visits are permitted. Nationalist terrorists held under DPS have long asked to be grouped together. In the AD four's cells, window grilles were replaced by bars. The group was held in nine-metre square cells. Exercise periods lasted one hour in a 9-metre-by-6-metre courtyard with overhead grille.
4. The group consisted of Aubron, Helyette Besse, Cipriani, Ménigon, Rouillan, Schleicher, the Halfens, Jean Asselmeyer, Dominique Poirré, Bruno Baudrillard, Annelise Benoit, Salvatore Nicosia and Spano (all imprisoned at the time of trial), Paula Abadie, Daniel Franck, Frédérique Germain, Charlotte Granier and Sandrine Guibert (all free at the time), Gloria Argano and Franco Fiorina (both imprisoned in Italy), and Hamami (in hiding).
5. Facing charges that day were Annelise Benoit, Bruno Baudrillard, Dominique Poirré, Jean Asselmeyer and Salvatore Nicosia.
6. Asselmeyer, a *conseiller d'éducation populaire* arrested on 13 December 1984, was born in 1942. Charged with associating with known criminals, he denied AD membership. In the 1970s, he helped create a French support committee for RAF members' lawyers and held views similar to that group.
7. *Libération*, 16–17 Jan. 1988.
8. Frédérique Germain, nicknamed 'Blondblond' by ADi members, was arrested on 31 May 1983. She participated in robbing the Aldebert jewellery shop. She was held in preventative detention, charged with associating with known criminals and then turned state-witness. Her testimony led to the arrest and conviction of Schleicher, Nicolas Halfen, Spano, Gloria Argano and her boy-friend, Claude Halfen. She was a central witness in the Avenue Trudaine trial.
9. Including M. and Mme. Schleicher, M. and Mme. Rouillan, Mme. Aubron, Mme. Poirré, Mme. Halfen, Mme. Delzongle-Baudrillard, Eric Delzongle and Mme. Bucchard.

10. Including film-maker Jean-Luc Godard, the Bishop of Evreux Jacques Gaillot, biologist Jacques Testard, physicist Hubert Reeves, Abbé Pierre, Jean-Louis Barrault, Jean-Pierre Cot, Henri Lefebvre, Pierre Juquin, Alain Geismar, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Gilles Deleuze, Gilles Perrault, Françoise Sagan and many lawyers.
11. *Le Monde*, 31 Jan.–1 Feb. 1988.
12. Marguerite Duras, Françoise Sagan, Monseigneur Gaillot, lawyers Guy Aurenche and Antoine Comte, and Dr Antoine Lazarus.
13. Including Etienne Balibar, Claude Castoriadis, Françoise d'Eaubonne, Félix Guattari, gay rights militant and writer Guy Hocquenheim (then dying of AIDS) and Gilles Deleuze.
14. Balibar, Castoriadis, d'Eaubonne, Guattari, Gérard Guégan, Hocquenheim and Deleuze.
15. The four defendants were held in prison from December 1985 until their trial.
16. A spin-off of AD appeared as Black War in 1985. See Appendix 4.2.
17. Another trial illustrated the one-time extent of the extreme-left 'pool'. On 17 April 1988 a trial began for the 28 August 1979 robbery of a tax collector's office in Condé-sur-l'Escaut. Defendants argued that they should not be tried since their crime fell under the 1981 amnesty pardoning infractions 'en relation avec une entreprise tendant à porter atteinte à l'autorité de l'Etat'. The court rejected the argument, stating that the crimes were common law infractions. In one of its last sittings after being abolished by the National Assembly on 17 July 1981, the *Cour de sûreté de l'Etat* stated that in this robbery 'rien ne permet de penser qu'il s'agit d'un acte subversif dirigé contre l'Etat français'. The detainees, in prison at the time of the amnesty, went on hunger-strike to demand release. They were freed in October 1981. In 1989, the accused claimed their actions were intended to finance an international network for victims of repression. The prosecutor maintained that the accused divided the money among themselves, which made it a common law rather than political offence. Those charged were: Italians François Pina (married and a father, a cinema lighting engineer), sailing instructor Luigi Amadori, Enrico and Oriana Bianco, Spaniard José de Miguel Martin, French printer Raymond Delgado, language teacher Martine Fournier, Angela Herbon, graphic designer Floreal Cuadrado, offset mounter Sylvie Porte, schoolteacher Annie Dessaux, photographer Jean-Pierre Cazenave-Laroche and German Werner Witteman. On 19 April, Lille SRJP divisional chief inspector Victor Prosc said the Condé-sur-l'Escaut robbery was a common-law crime. The statement weakened defence arguments, but RG involvement indicated that the robbery had a political dimension. Early investigations established connections between the group and AD. On 26 April, the court freed Delgado, Cuadrado, Fournier, Porte, Dessaux and Cazenave-Laroche under the 1981 amnesty. Amadori was sentenced to 14 months for receiving stolen goods. The court reacted unfavourably to his purchase of a sailboat with the money that he had received and to the fact that he also faced drug charges.
18. *Le Monde*, 19 July 1989.
19. *Le Monde*, 21 July 1989.
20. Ibid.
21. Aïssou was an Algerian national born in 1956 in Lyon.
22. Laigle hid arms and sheltered ADn on his parents' property when he was 20 years old. He later participated in some armed robberies. Terrorized by Olivier, he tried to flee but was arrested in Munich Airport on 18 October 1987.
23. Including Frédéric Potecher, Claude Bourdet, Tahar Ben Jalloun, Leïla Sebbar and Bishop of Evreux Jacques Gaillot.
24. Polack was born in 1955. He was a photographer at the agency *Collectif Presse*. Questioned on 5 August 1986 in connection with investigations into ADn, he was imprisoned in Lyon for armed robbery, complicity with armed robbery and receiving stolen goods.
25. Olivier, Frérot, Ballandras, Crépet, Blanc, François Polak, Christian Dubray, Vecchi, Augay, Chantal Lahy, Succab, Eket, Jean-Charles Laporal, Aïssou, Daniel Reynaud, Laigle, Turin, Nicole Charvolin, Henri Cachau-Hereillat and Pascal Fort.
26. See *Le Monde*, 16 May 1989.
27. Faure was born in 1960. She was married and pregnant when arrested. She had broken with ADn in 1983. Her love for Blanc, born in her Loire village, led to a supporting role.
28. *Le Monde*, 30 June 1989.

29. Daniel Reynaud, Vecchi, Succab, Eket, Laigle, Christian Dubray, Chantal Clairret, François Polak, Augay, Henry Cachau Hereillat, Faure and Pascal Fort.
30. Despite heavy sentences for members of AD, some extreme-left terrorism continued. On 20 May 1989, an explosion hit Saint-Pierre de Chaillot church in Paris. A tract by the 'section Gracchus Babeuf' claimed responsibility. François-Noël 'Gracchus' Babeuf advocated communism and creation of a 'society of equals'. In 1796, he and Buonarroti tried to overthrow the Directory. Executed in 1797, he left the name *babouvisme*.

APPENDIX 4.4

ACTION DIRECTE COMMANDO UNITS

1979-82

*Clodo (Comité liquidant ou détournant les ordinateurs)**Affiche rouge**Jeune Taupe**Casse-Noix**Mouton-Enragés**Nous**Badinter (Bombers anonymes pour la défense des incarcérés très excités par Robbery)**Germain**Comité Riposte à la répression en Algérie*

ADi:

*Commando Lahouari Farid Benchellal**Unité combattante Antonio Lo Musico**Commando George Jackson (with RAF)**Commando Christos Kassimis**Commando Pierre-Overney**Unité combattante Marcel Rayman**Commando Ciro Rizzato**Commando Elisabeth-von-Dick*

ADn:

*Commando Hienghène**Commando Ahmed-Moulay**Commando B. Moloise**Commando Loïc Lefèvre**Commando Clarence Payi-Sipho Xulu**Unité combattante Sana Mheidli*

La mouvance:

Comité unitaire de défense des prisonniers politiques

APPENDIX 5.1

COMMUNIQUÉ NUMÉRO 7, 18 MARCH 1980

De Gafsa à Djamena (sic), de Djibouti à Bangui, l'armée française fait régner l'ordre afin de préserver la prospérité du commerce néo-colonialiste de la marchandise et de la main-d'œuvre. Marchands d'armes, négriers, trafiquants officiels et officieux . . . Toute la politique française pue! A Gafsa comme à Barbès, la même exploitation, la même misère. Des H. L. M. de Vitry aux bidonvilles, les donneurs de coups de trique ont la même gueule. Les ratissages à Djibouti, la torture à Gafsa, l'espace judiciaire, l'Etat de siège à la Goutte-d'Or; la même répression. Lutter contre la politique impérialiste de la France en Afrique, c'est lutter contre l'Etat français dans la globalité de ses institutions. Il est temps de prendre les armes contre l'Etat négrier.

(From Gafsa to Djamena (sic), from Djibouti to Bangui, the French army keeps order so as to preserve the prosperity of neo-colonialist trade in merchandise and labourers. Arms dealers, slave traders, official and unofficial traffickers . . . The entire French policy stinks! In Gafsa as in Barbès, the same exploitation, the same misery. From the public housing in Vitry to the shanty-towns, those who use the cudgel have the same face. Police sweeps in Djibouti, torture in Gafsa, judicial space, the state of siege in Goutte-d'Or; the same repression. To struggle against French imperialist policy in Africa is also to struggle against the entire range of French state institutions. It is time to take up arms against the slave-trading state.)